MARIA CECILIA:

OR

LIFE

AND

ADVENTURES

Of the DAUGHTER of

ACHMET III.

EMPEROR OF THE TURKS.

FROM THE FRENCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MAY

TO THE READER.

OF the ſubſtance of the following Hiſtory I will warrant the truth. I have before me the moſt authentic papers, which confirm it. There may be ſome epiſodes, the reality of which I cannot equally affirm, as the original pieces neceſſary to prove them were wanting; ſo that the moſt part of them I could only recite as they were related to me.

THE EDITOR.

MARIA CECILIA.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION. EMILIA'S HISTORY. CARRIED OFF BY PIRATES.

THE moſt noble birth, the moſt unremitting adverſity; the dangers to which beauty is expoſed, and the triumphs of virtue; the weakneſs of the ſex, and the efforts of fortitude; haughtineſs of ſoul, and tenderneſs of heart; the pride of blood, and frequent humiliations of fortune, are the contraſts which my life exhibits. Heaven, inſcrutable in

its deſigns, devoted to misfortune a princeſs, who, at her birth, ſeemed deſtined to the apparent ſerenity of a palace.

That the *ſombre* pencil of misfortune not unfrequently ſhadows the deſtiny of the great, is a leſſon that cannot be too often inculcated. It tempers the pride of ſome, quiets the murmurs of others, and teaches all, that there is no real happineſs but what is derived from virtue. The misfortunes of king Staniſlaus, and the magnanimity with which he bore thoſe misfortunes, have, perhaps, produced more virtuous ſentiments in the human heart, than the long and peaceful example of the Antonines.

I was born in the ſeraglio of * * * * *, in the month of January, 1710; the daughter of the greateſt man that ever ſat upon the Ottoman throne; of that Achmet III. ſo celebrated for his cou-

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rage, generoſity, and magnanimity; nor leſs known by the cataſtrophe which deprived him of his ſceptre in 1730. My mother was a native of Georgia, named Aſki, whoſe wit, talents, and beauty, had a long time fixed the heart of the ſultan.

I was kept in ignorance of the early events of my life, till my reaſon was ſufficiently matured for them to be confided to me without fear. I will relate them as they were then diſcloſed to me. No ſooner was I uſhered into life than the ſtorm began to growl over my head. Dangers beſet my cradle; nor did the calm of infancy ſhelter me from the tempeſt of the paſſions: I was the ſport of thoſe of others long before I was the prey of my own.

An Italian ſlave, twenty-ſix years of age, who had been ten years ſhut up in

the ſeraglio, and whom my mother valued for her mental talents, and the variety of her accompliſhments, received me into her arms when I firſt ſaw the light. Among the Turks, unſkilful in all the arts, thoſe which contribute to the preſervation of health conſiſt only of ridiculous notions. From this ignorance ariſes the abſurd practices they employ in midwifery, by which the ſufferings of the patient are always increaſed, and of which too many are the victims. Fatima, (this was the name of the ſlave,) the daughter of a ſurgeon in the neighbourhood of Geneva, had left her country at an age ſufficiently advanced to have acquired ſome knowledge of medicine from her father. She was fortunate enough to render my mother's ſituation leſs painful than was uſual. This endeared her ſtill more to Aſki. Her credit increaſed: the generous Achmet loaded her with preſents; and

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I was, without heſitation, entruſted to her care.

From a remarkable ſingularity of nature I refuſed the breaſt; and a few drops of Cyprus wine were the firſt nutriment I received. It ſeems as if I had then perceived the eternal barrier that fate was about to place between me and my parents.

Before I proceed, it may not be improper to give my readers a ſketch of the character of my governeſs. Gentle, honeſt, virtuous; to the charms of perſon Fatima added thoſe of an amiable character, Her education had been carefully attended to. She ſung with taſte, deſigned with elegance, and danced gracefully. A caſt of melancholy rendered her more intereſting, and heightened the effect of her talents. The pleaſures her company gave were

more thoſe of the ſoul than thoſe of the ſenſes. She amuſed without being gay; ſhe pleaſed without amuſing. Her melancholy aroſe from the ſenſibility of her heart. Torn from a lover, to whom ſhe was on the point of being united; ſo long immured within the walls of a ſeraglio, the love of her religion had, as it were, replaced her former paſſion. Her heart was formed for tenderneſs: it had only changed its object. To theſe two paſſions, which ſwayed the ſoul of Fatima, did heaven link that chain of events, which my future life was to exhibit.

A young Genoeſe, named Salmoni, ſaw her at the age of ſixteen. From that moment he loved her with ardour. He procured an introduction to the houſe of Fatima's father. After two years of aſſiduity his deſires were acceded to; and theſe lovers were on the point

point of being united, when they were ſeparated by the moſt cruel misfortune.

No one is ignorant of the heat to which Italy is expoſed in the ſummer. The calmneſs of the Mediterranean frequently tempts evening parties to taſte the freſhneſs of the air on its tranquil ſurface. Fatima and Salmoni had gone half a league from the ſhore, in a ſmall boat, to talk of love, and enjoy the coolneſs of the evening. Two boatmen, the ſerene ſky, and the placid waves, were the only witneſſes to the effuſions of their paſſion. The moon had not yet riſen; and the feeble glimmering of the ſtars did not permit them to diſtinguiſh objects. On a ſudden the noiſe of oars excites their attention; and, in an inſtant, a light bark comes up to their boat; ſome men leap into it without ſaying a word, ſeize Fatima, cover her mouth with a handkerchief, and lift

her into their bark. Mad at the ſight, Salmoni attempts to defend his miſtreſs; but a few ſtrokes of a poniard lay him weltering in his blood. The two boats ſeparate: that of Fatima's raviſhers puts to ſea, the other mournfully returns to Genoa. The deſpair of Salmoni, and his wounds, witneſſed the truth of this terrible event. This ſcene paſſed with the rapidity of lightning; and the two lovers were ſurprized, attacked, and ſeparated almoſt in an inſtant.

The diſtreſs of Fatima may eaſily be conceived, when the dawn of the next morning diſcovered to her, that ſhe was in an Algerine bark: and the language and appearance of her raviſhers left her no room to doubt of her fate.

To

To explain the manner of Fatima's being taken away, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that the Turkiſh merchants, who trade in ſlaves, frequently approach the ſea coaſts thus, under favour of the night. They are acquainted with the moſt frequented places, repair to them, remain there in profound ſilence, and if any boat unhappily paſs near them, they board it in an inſtant, and their prey is carried off before it has time to defend itſelf. Iman (this was the name of the merchant) arrived in the evening near the mouth of the port of Genoa. Some tender couplets, which Salmoni accompanied with a mandolin, led Iman to ſuppoſe, that a female was the object of them. The capturing a beauty is extremely flattering to the avarice of theſe pirates. Iman's reſolution, therefore, was ſoon formed; and the execution of it, which we have juſt read, inſtantly followed.

The reſpect theſe merchants pay to their captives is proportioned to their beauty. I have already ſaid, that Fatima was agreeable; but ſhe was not poſſeſſed of ſufficient charms to be admitted amongſt the numbers of thoſe proud *odaliques*, whom the ſultan ſometimes deigns to favour with the ſmiles they court. Iman haſtened to reach the port of Fez. He did not, at firſt, entertain any very high opinion of the value of his prize; but ſome talents which, during the paſſage, he diſcovered his ſlave to poſſeſs, gave him hopes of diſpoſing of her to advantage, and induced him to treat her with more gentleneſs than he had done at firſt.

Iman arrived at Fez a few days before the departure of the ambaſſador, who is charged with the annual tribute paid by that kingdom to the grand ſeignor. Iſmael Amdit, who was at that time honoured

noured with that poſt, was accompanied by one of his wives, for whom he had the tendereſt affection, and who, a prey to melancholy, ſeemed gradually approaching the grave. Her huſband anxiouſly ſought whatever could amuſe her, or attract her attention. Iman knew how to profit by this circumſtance. He had the addreſs to diſplay the talents of Fatima to Iſmael; to perſuade him, that ſhe was capable of amuſing the object of his love, and even, perhaps, by that means, of reſtoring her health. Iſmael, enchanted with the proſpect, embraced it with tranſport; and the avaricious Iman made the moſt of the ambaſſador's credulity, ſelling him Fatima at an enormous price. But this did not preſerve the life of Iſmael's wife, who died on the voyage from Fez to Conſtantinople, whither Fatima attended her diſconſolate maſter.

Iſmael could not bear the preſence of any thing that recalled to his memory the image of the woman he adored. He diſpoſed of Fatima, who was purchaſed by the grand vizier, and placed amongſt thoſe ſlaves, whoſe accompliſhments render them fit for the amuſements contrived to entertain the miſtreſſes of the ſultan. By degrees ſhe acquired the friendſhip of the ſultana Aſki, and obtained the high honour, as I have already obſerved, of being intruſted with the care of my infancy. Ten years of abſence had not baniſhed from her heart the remembrance of Salmoni, but they had inſenſibly worn away the poignancy of a cruel ſeparation. No one is ignorant of the power which the Chriſtian religion has on a virtuous mind, and that of Fatima was truly virtuous.

From that religion, the ſublimity of whoſe moral ſyſtem is only equalled by the

the divinity of its origin, we derive a reſignation to thoſe misfortunes which God is pleaſed to ſend us, and an unbounded ſubmiſſion to his decrees, which teaches us to commit out fate into the hands of Providence without repining. What, indeed, are our ſufferings, compared with thoſe of him who died to ſave us? This religion, profeſſed in ſecret by Fatima within the walls of the ſeraglio, poured the balm of comfort into the wounds of her heart. Thoſe wounds were no longer bleeding, but the ſcars were tender; the ſlighteſt touch was ſufficient to open them afreſh in a ſingle inſtant. That inſtant decided the fate of a daughter to one of the firſt potentates in the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

SALMONI'S TRAVELS.
TIDINGS OF HIS LOVE.
VOYAGE TO FEZ.

IT is eaſy to conceive the deſpair into which Salmoni was thrown by the loſs of Fatima, the grief of the two families, and the vague conjectures which that event occaſioned. The morning, which followed that unfortunate night, diſcovered a French ſquadron, that had anchored at the mouth of the harbour of Genoa whilſt it was dark. The reputation for gallantry which that nation has acquired, and which the Italian jealouſy magnifies, ſeemed to afford a gleam of light to the unfortunate Salmoni.

moni. He doubted not but that thoſe veſſels concealed his miſtreſs, and that the French were the authors of his calamity. But he could not flatter himſelf that the Genoeſe government would take the leaſt ſtep in favour of his wiſhes. The terror which the name of Louis XIV. ſpread throughout Europe, and which was deeply impreſſed on the minds of the Genoeſe, whoſe title of proud could not ſave them from the moſt degrading humiliation, would not ſuffer the ſenate of Genoa, at that time, to make the ſlighteſt remonſtrance. Such are unfortunately the general conſequences of human weakneſs. The juſt puniſhment of a fault that has been committed, leaves behind it a fear that ſeems to extinguiſh, in the mind of man, the claims he has on juſtice. It appears to him as if his having wanted the power to keep himſelf from being in the wrong, rendered him incapable of ever being in the

the right. This is a ſingular paradox; for his confidence of obtaining juſtice ought to increaſe, from the very circumſtance of his having been juſtly puniſhed.

Salmoni, having nothing to hope from the interference of his country, took a reſolution agreeable to the violence of his love. He determined to go to Toulon, to wait for the ſquadron, which was ſoon to return thither, and, carefully examining every one who ſhould diſembark from the ſhips, to convince himſelf of what his mind ſcarce doubted. In ſpite of the tears of his family, that ſought to retain him; in ſpite of his deep and dangerous wounds, that were not yet cured, he departed from Genoa, arrived at Toulon before the ſquadron, and had very ſoon the grief of ſeeing all his hopes vaniſh. Notwithſtanding the diligence of his inquiries,

inquiries, he could learn no news of his miſtreſs. This increaſed his grief, inflamed his wounds, and, in a few days, he ſaw himſelf at the point of death.

He knows little of love, who ſuppoſes that time is capable of eradicating it from a heart of which it has once been abſolute maſter. Love never ceaſes to hope. Abſence irritates it: difficulties and obſtacles increaſe its ardour. When we no longer ſee the object of our paſſion, the heart feels the moſt pungent ſorrow; but the imagination preſents the image of that object to the mind; every day gives it a new charm at the expence of reaſon; every day the voice of reaſon is leſs attended to; and we are at laſt aſtoniſhed to find, that ſymptoms of madneſs ſucceed to the moſt gentle paſſion which nature ever implanted in the human breaſt.

To his youth, and the ſtrength of his conſtitution, Salmoni was indebted for the preſervation of his life. He eaſily perſuaded himſelf, that his obſervations could not have extended to every place, and that his ſearch had not been ſo minute as it ought. Perhaps he had been known, the motive of his curioſity gueſſed, and as much precaution employed to conceal his miſtreſs, as he had exerted diligence in his purſuit of her. In conſequence of this idea he left Toulon, repaired to Paris, and rambled ſucceſſively through England, Holland, and Germany. Exhauſted, rather than tired, with the fruitleſs enquiries in which he had ſpent eight years, he at laſt went to Marſeilles, with an intention to return to Italy.

Contrary winds detained him ſome time in that city. One evening, as he was walking on the quay, a galley ſlave begged

begged alms of him. Salmoni aſked him a few queſtions; learnt that he was a Tuniſian, had been a captive two years, and waited a favourable opportunity to recover his liberty. Salmoni gave him ſome money; and as he was about to depart, the galley ſlave ſaid to him, with a ſmile, I perceive, by your accent, ſir, that you are a Genoeſe. If you knew me, you would not be ſo generous to me. Why? ſaid Salmoni. Becauſe I have done a great deal of miſchief to your country.—How?—I have aſſiſted in taking away more than twenty young girls from it in the courſe of my life. Theſe words excited ſtrong agitations in the mind of Salmoni. He related what had happened to him, the time, the circumſtances, deſcribed Fatima.—No one, ſaid the ſlave, interrupting him, can relate that adventure better than I. I was preſent. I was then in the ſervice of a merchant of Fez, called

ed Iman. I was one of thoſe who ſtabbed the young man in the boat. Ah! wretch, cried Salmoni, 'twas I you aſſaſſinated. The ſlave, more dead than alive, curſed his indiſcretion: but what was his aſtoniſhment when Salmoni fell on his neck, calling him his benefactor, his friend, his preſerver.

After his firſt tranſports were over, he inquired how he might find Iman, and where he lived. He, indeed, aſked every queſtion, that can be ſuppoſed to come into the mind of a man in love to diſtraction. The artful ſlave replied, if I were at liberty I would conduct you to Iman, and we ſhould undoubtedly diſcover her whom you ſo ardently deſire to ſee. But for that purpoſe it would be neceſſary to pay my ranſom, which, perhaps, is a greater ſacrifice than you are diſpoſed to make. If that be all, ſaid Salmoni, you ſhall ſoon be at liberty.

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In fact, he repaired immediately to the commiſſary, and eaſily ranſomed the ſlave. Unable to reſtrain his impatience, he the next day hired a tartan, belonging to Marſeilles; and the wind, that prevented his return to Italy, being fair for Africa, he put to ſea immediately, and ſoon loſt ſight of the mountains of Provence.

Were it not for the ſtrongeſt conviction of the omnipotence of the creator, we ſhould be tempted to believe that there are, in nature, two principles, continually at war with each other; one willing events, the other oppoſing them. On the prevalence of one or the other my deſtiny ſeems to have depended. Was Salmoni to diſcover the ſituation of Fatima, or was he not? If not, undoubtedly I ſhould never have left the palace of my father; and it appears as though ſome powerful inviſible agent uſed every

effort

effort to prevent his finding her. But ſome one more powerful rendered all thoſe efforts vain.

Salmoni now indulged himſelf in all thoſe pleaſing reveries that fill the mind of a lover, burning to ſee a miſtreſs from whom he has been long ſeparated. The coaſts of Africa were in ſight; and if the wind continued fair, the next day would land him ſafe at Fez. He retired to reſt full of the moſt pleaſing ideas; nor did he awake till long after ſun-riſe. He aroſe. Perceiving a kind of embarraſſment on the countenances of the captain and the crew, he aſked the reaſon of it. They were ſilent a long while. At laſt the captain ſaid, you will be no leſs ſurprized than we are, when you are informed, that your ſlave has diſappeared. We have ſought him in vain all over the veſſel; nor can we conceive what is become of him. As

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it was calm all night, he cannot have been waſhed overboard: beſides, half the crew was on the watch; the veſſel is ſmall, and a man falling in the water makes a noiſe; he muſt, therefore, have been heard. The devil has certainly taken away this dog of a muſſulman.

Had a clap of thunder burſt at the feet of Salmoni he would not have been ſo ſtrucken. His hopes were vaniſhed in an inſtant. On the point of finding himſelf in an country with whoſe language he was unacquainted; having no clue to guide him in his ſearch, but the name of Iman, which he happily remembered; without recommendation, without acquaintance, in the midſt of a people poſſeſſed of neither faith nor probity, hating Chriſtians, and who, ignorant of the laws of nations, might make a jeſt of retaining him as a ſlave. At the firſt inſtant he was tempted to return

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to France; but love got the better of prudence, and abandoning himſelf to fate, he purſued his courſe.

The ſlave's diſappearing was certainly incomprehenſible. They were all aſtoniſhed at it. Salmoni queſtioned by turns each of the ſailors: not one gave him a ſatisfactory anſwer, or even dropped a ſingle word, that could lead to the ſlighteſt conjecture. In reality each was as ignorant of the affair as himſelf. The wind freſhening, the port of Fez was ſoon in ſight; and, in a few hours, they anchored under the walls of the city.

Salmoni landed, and preſented himſelf at the gates. An interpreter, who is always there to interrogate ſtrangers, aſked who he was. He anſwered a Frenchman. The bombardment of Algiers, which had happened a little before,

fore, had rendered this name terrible to thoſe barbarians. He was introduced, therefore, without difficulty, and a guard was appointed to conduct him to the French conſul's. After the uſual compliments, Salmoni took the conſul aſide, acquainted him with his country, his misfortunes, the fruitleſſneſs of his long reſearches, the object of his voyage, his recent loſs of the only man that could have aſſiſted him, and the name of the merchant, which he had not forgotten. The conſul felt for this unfortunate young man. He aſked if he had any money. Salmoni anſwered, yes. So much the better, replied the conſul; there are very few things that money will not effect in this country; and I do not deſpair of your ſucceeding in your reſearch.

The conſul went with him to the cadi. This gentleman, ſaid he, is an Italian,

whom the king, my maſter, has taken under his protection: he will inform you of his buſineſs; and it is my requeſt, that you give him all the aſſiſtance in your power. Salmoni, adviſed by the conſul, took care to put a purſe, containing an hundred ſequins, into the hands of the cadi, before he addreſſed him; and having thus diſpoſed him to liſten favourably to his requeſt, informed him of his wiſhes. The cadi diſpatched a meſſenger to Iman immediately. The meſſenger ſoon returned with information, that Iman had been at ſea two months, and was not expected for five or ſix weeks. You ſee, Chriſtian, ſaid the cadi, I can do nothing: you muſt wait the arrival of Iman: for my part I know nothing of her whom you ſeek.

Theſe delays were terrible to Salmoni: yet there was no remedy but patience.

tience. The conſul, ſenſible of his grief, did every thing he could to render his houſe agreeable to him, and endeavoured, in ſome meaſure, to alleviate his ſorrows, by amuſing his mind.

Salmoni was tall, well made, and of an engaging addreſs. His countenance was gentle, and his whole appearance beſpoke a tranquillity of mind. But theſe deciitful appearances concealed a ſoul of fire, capable of the higheſt exceſſes, and of a perſeverance ſeldom to be met with. When I was arrived at years of diſcretion I knew him, and of courſe I was able to form a judgement of his character: though he was not then young, his exterior eaſily diſcovered what it had been. He was five or ſix and twenty when at Fez, and, of courſe, muſt then have been handſome.

A Neapolitan woman, who was houſe-keeper to the French conſul, could not avoid being ſtruck with Salmoni. This woman had long been a ſlave; but her maſter, at his death, gave her her freedom. Having no expectations in her own country, ſhe had entered into the ſervice of the conſul. At this time ſhe was near forty; but ſhe was ſtill agreeable. Notwithſtanding the difference of religion, and the hazard ſhe ran, ſhe had long received the addreſſes of a Turk; but the ſight of Salmoni in an inſtant made her inconſtant. For this inconſtancy ſhe paid dearly in a very ſhort time.

Love is clear ſighted. She ſoon perceived that a deep-rooted paſſion preyed on the heart of Salmoni. This diſcovery thwarted, but did not extinguiſh her love. We eaſily flatter ourſelves. Reckoning on the power of her charms,

ſhe did not deſpair of captivating him, if ſhe could gain his confidence. Not poſſeſſing too much delicacy, the heart of her lover was not her object. She preferred ſenſual gratifications to all the ſweet enjoyments of the ſoul, that ſpring from mutual love.

She began with thoſe ſlight attentions, thoſe minute preferences, which always intereſt a ſenſible heart, and which are particularly the moſt artful baits that can be uſed for the unhappy. The heart that is deeply affected, looks around to find a depoſitary for its griefs. Salmoni was every day diſcourſing to the conſul of the violence of his paſſion. But a confidence between the two ſexes has a peculiar charm, and the heart is more ſolaced by it. Salmoni was too much in love to ſuſpect the motive of the Neapolitan's attentions. He gave himſelf up, without reſerve, to the pleaſing con-

ſolation of ſpeaking of his pains to an agreeable woman, who appeared to liſten to them with tenderneſs, and whoſe country and language had a particular affinity to his own, in a place where he was ſurrounded with ſtrangers.

This was a great ſtep for the Neapolitan, yet it was but little to the end ſhe propoſed. She ſaw Salmoni's confidence increaſe every day; ſhe was even certain of his friendſhip. But this was far from ſufficient; and all her cares were repaid only by thoſe civilities, which a gallant man cannot refuſe to the attentions of a woman. She was ſenſible, that whilſt Salmoni retained the leaſt hope of recovering Fatima, ſhe ſhould never remove his attachment. She determined, therefore, by one deſperate ſtroke, to eradicate a paſſion that, whilſt it ſubſiſted, would be an inſurmountable obſtacle to her deſires.

When

When ſhe had once formed her reſolution, ſhe put off the execution of it no longer than till the next interview.

The conſul had a magnificent garden. The exceſſive heat, that reigns on the coaſts of Africa, makes ſhade deſirable. Green arbours, made ſtill more refreſhing by fountains playing in a thouſand pleaſing forms, rendered this ſpot delicious. The inhabitants of this country have no intercourſe with Europeans, except on buſineſs. The conſul had ſcarcely any ſociety in the city, which was to him a kind of deſert; he had endeavoured, therefore, to embelliſh his garden as much as was poſſible. Theſe retreats had a charm for Salmoni: their ſolitude was fitted to the diſpoſition of his mind: he paſſed almoſt whole days in them. Here, where ſhe frequently ſought him, the Neapolitan had fixed

the ſcene of a confidence which he little ſuſpected.

Always ſad, always ſorrowful! ſaid ſhe, coming up to him. Have not eight years of abſence quieted your mind? The ladies who have ſeen you cannot have been pleaſed with this miſtreſs of yours, for having thus occupied your heart. Was ſhe the only one in the world worthy of your love? But do you know, that thus waſting your youth in an unavailing conſtancy, is to ſpend it in a ſhameful indifference. Extremes always approach each other. Take care, ſaid Salmoni, how you talk in this manner before thoſe who do not know you, amiable as you are, they will ſuppoſe you have never been beloved, and that, with your charms, is impoſſible.—The compliment is prettily turned; but confeſs, however, that you are ſtrangely duped, if your miſtreſs ſhould chance to prove

prove faithleſs, or, which is very poſſible, if ſhe were dead, thus to purſue an imaginary being.—No: my heart tells me, that we ſhall meet again.—I wiſh it may be ſo: and, indeed, there are many names reſemble each other.—What! did you know her?—I cannot ſay. I knew an Emilia: was not her name Emilia?—I have told you ſo an hundred times. Heavens! you knew her, and never yet diſcovered it to me!—Certainly: the news would not be very pleaſing: beſides, I am miſtaken: your Emilia was from Rome, I think; the one I knew was from Genoa: they cannot be the ſame.—Go on, in the name of God! my Emilia was from Genoa. How often have I told you ſo?—Indeed?—What! ſhould I deceive you?—Ah! if that be the caſe, how I repent of my indiſcretion! I perceive, that I ſhall pierce your heart, and I am not a woman to offer you conſolation: no,

never: if your heart were at liberty, I do not think I ſhould accept it.—Put an end to my perplexity at once. What do you know of Emilia?—Well! you will promiſe to behave like a man: but, I know you will. We love a miſtreſs to-day, and find ten to-morrow. I do not ſpeak of myſelf, however: I am not young enough to inſpire love.

During all this diſcourſe, Salmoni was on the rack. Finiſh your ſtory, ſaid he, or I ſhall die at your feet of anxiety and impatience.—I muſt! well, I was acquainted with your miſtreſs. I was the ſlave of Iſmael Abdil, when this Iman, for whom you are waiting, ſold her to him for five hundred ſequins. Iſmael became deſperately in love with her. She was not cruel, and died accompanying him to Conſtantinople.

At theſe words Salmoni fell dead at her feet. The blow was ſtruck, and this was all the treacherous Neapolitan wiſhed. Judging of Salmoni by herſelf, ſhe hoped ſoon to be miſtreſs of a heart, from which ſhe had baniſhed her rival in ſo cruel a manner. Unable to recall him to his ſenſes, ſhe cried out for help. The people of the houſe ſoon came to her aſſiſtance, and the conſul neglected nothing to recover him. Enquiring the cauſe of the accident, the Neapolitan declared with an ingenuous air, what ſhe had imparted to him; obſerving, that ſhe had done him a real ſervice, in delivering him from a paſſion, which the death of his miſtreſs rendered of no avail.

The relation appeared to the conſul extremely probable. He knew that the Neapolitan had actually belonged to Iſmael Abdil, who had given her her

freedom at his death; and he thought the truth could not be doubted, if Iman, at his return, agreed in having ſold Emilia to that Moor.

The moment he heard that Iman was returned, he went to his houſe, without acquainting Salmoni, who had been in ſo weak a ſtate, ever ſince the converſation with the Neapolitan, that his life was deſpaired of. The conſul was too well acquainted with every circumſtance relative to the capturing Emilia, for him to find any difficulty in putting queſtions to Iman. The merchant, without the leaſt heſitation, ſaid, that he recollected the adventure very well, though it was near nine years ago: that he had ſold the young woman to Iſmael Abdil, who was departing for Conſtantinople, to carry the tribute to the grand ſeignor; and, that he had heard nothing of her ſince.

If,

If, the merchant had added, that Iſmael bought this ſlave merely with the hope of diverting his ſpouſe, who was falling a prey to melancholy, it would have given ſtrong reaſons to ſuſpect the Neapolitan's veracity: but this he avoided, as it would have tended to diſcloſe ſome of the manœuvres of his trade.

The conſul no longer doubted the death of Emilia. He, by degrees, prepared Salmoni to receive this laſt confirmation of his misfortune; and friendſhip, more attentive than love, employed all thoſe precautions which the blind paſſion of the Neapolitan was not capable of.

The repeated kindneſſes of the conſul, and the intereſted attentions of the Neapolitan, ſoftened, in ſome meaſure, the ſorrows of the unfortunate Genoeſe.

From

From this that woman drew favourable concluſions, and did not deſpair of ſoon reaping the fruits of her deteſtable ſcheme: but the moment was approaching, in which heaven took vengeance of her guilt, and puniſhed a conduct, that had long incurred its diſpleaſure.

The Turk, who had been a lover of the Neapolitan, ſoon perceived his miſtreſs's coolneſs. He beſet her with ſpies, and eaſily learnt the cauſe of her infidelity. Every one knows the effects of jealouſy in that people. Too haughty to ſtoop to reproaches, the Turks have not the art of loading the deceiver with contempt: the blood of the treacherous miſtreſs can alone waſh out the ſhame. His ſpies informed him, that Salmoni did not return the paſſion of his inconſtant lover; and this ſaved Salmoni's life. All his vengeance fell upon the Neapolitan, nor was it long

before its cruel effects diſplayed themſelves.

Salmoni, enfeebled and worn out with grief, felt a pleaſure, that love alone can know, in frequently reviſiting the arbour, in which, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, he had received the ſentence of death. This arbour was at a diſtance from the conſul's houſe. The Neapolitan often accompanied him thither. One evening, as the darkneſs of approaching night obliged them to quit it, Salmoni felt himſelf ſeized by the arm. Is it thou, Chriſtian? ſaid a rough voice to him. Yes, replied he. Be witneſs, then, ſaid the unknown, of the vengeance of an enraged lover. The perfidious woman, that accompanies thee, once loved me: thou art now the object of her love; nor was it her fault, that her crime has not been carried to the utmoſt. Thy

indifference,

indifference has ſaved thy life. I am not an aſſaſſin; but I am capable of avenging myſelf. With theſe words he plunged his poniard into the Neapolitan's boſom—O God! I am murdered, cried ſhe.—Come, Chriſtian; leave that wretch. Thou art weak; I will lead thee. Salmoni, ſtruck with horror at the ſcene, gave himſelf up to his guide, without uttering a word, and was led to the conſul's houſe by the Turk, who retired as ſoon as he had delivered him into the hands of the domeſtics.

As ſoon as Salmoni could ſpeak, and the conſul was informed of the adventure, his ſervants ran with lights to the place, where this tragic ſcene had been acted. On learning that a Turk was the perpetrator, he could not flatter himſelf with obtaining vengeance for this violation of his ſanctuary, as the

government

government of Fez was too ſubmiſſive to the Ottoman Porte, to ſacrifice a ſubject of the grand ſeignor on ſuch an account. He reſolved, therefore, to paſs it over in ſilence, without complaining to his court; as the attempt was not made with any intention of inſulting the power which he repreſented.

The unfortunate Neapolitan was carried ſenſeleſs to her chamber. A ſurgeon, who was ſent for, declared, that ſhe was not yet dead, but that the wound was mortal, and that it was impoſſible for her to ſurvive it. Some cordials recalled her to her ſenſes. The conſul took upon himſelf to inform her of her danger, and exhort her to think only of her future ſtate.

The night was already far advanced when ſhe came to herſelf. The conſul had inſiſted on Salmoni's retiring to reſt.

reſt. His weakneſs, and the emotions into which the ſcene he had juſt witneſſed had thrown him, made him yield to the ſolicitations of his hoſt, and he had retired. He was aſleep when the conſul, entering his chamber, at four o'clock in the morning, ſaid to him with eagerneſs, riſe, my friend. I fear the Neapolitan has but a few hours to live. She aſks for you: ſhe ſays, that ſhe has an important ſecret to diſcloſe to you. Come inſtantly, leſt death ſhould prevent her. If I may gueſs from ſome incoherent words, the ſecret concerns your love.

Salmoni followed the conſul to her chamber. Is he there? ſaid ſhe, with a faint voice. When ſhe was informed that he was, ſhe made a ſign to the conſul for the attendants to withdraw. Then, collecting the little ſtrength that was left her, I am dying, ſaid ſhe: I

am

am going to appear before my eternal judge; may the pardon, which I ſincerely aſk of you both, obtain mine at the foot of his throne. May I hope for pardon from him?—Yes! his mercy is infinite.—He has granted me thoſe few hours to repent. I have deſerved my fate, nor do I murmur at it. Pardon me both of you: I have highly offended both. You, by carrying on in your houſe an illicit commerce with that Turk, who has ſo juſtly puniſhed me for my infidelity: you, by conceiving a fatal paſſion for you, for which death is my recompenſe. I treated you barbarouſly: barbarouſly I deſerved to be treated. May the confeſſion of my crime repair the grief I have cauſed you! I wiſhed to be the ſole miſtreſs of your heart: I have cruelly impoſed on you. Your Emilia yet lives: ſhe is called Fatima—O God! cried Salmoni.—Do not interrupt me, continued ſhe: I feel myſelf

myſelf grow faint, and your happineſs depends on what I have to ſay. She then informed him of what has been already related concerning Fatima; and continuing with a broken voice, will you pardon me? Say, that you pardon me. By that attachment, which I have ſhewn for you: by that love: alas! it was extreme. Had it been inſpired by virtue, never had woman loved you more tenderly. But pardon me. Do not let me appear before my judge, with your curſes on my head. Ah! draw nearer: my eyes cloſe: I——Yes, unhappy woman, we forgive you: may that God whom we all ſerve forgive you alſo. She ſeemed to revive a moment; the ſmile of hope appeared on her lips amidſt the horrors of death: ſhe feebly preſſed a hand of each with her own: ſhe reclined her head: and ſhe was no more.

They

They withdrew from this mournful ſpectacle into another apartment. See, my dear Salmoni, ſaid the conſul, to what our diſorderly paſſions lead us. What an example! I am no longer of an age to fear their power; but you are yet young, and I ſee the violence of your diſpoſition. Pardon me, if my friendſhip call your attention for a moment to the fatal effects of the paſſions. I ſhall never, perhaps, ſee you again; yet I have a ſincere affection for you. I could wiſh to know that you were happy; and happineſs can only be obtained by being maſters of ourſelves. Reflect on the fate which this unhappy woman has brought on herſelf, by having blindly given up the reins to her paſſions. If ourſelves alone were the ſufferers by their effects, we ſhould deſerve pity: but they extend to all who are connected with us, and thus we become objects of deteſtation. What would have become

of

of you, if the poniard of her lover had inſtantly bereft her of life? The ſhort remainder of your days would have been ſpent in miſery. The man who gives way to his paſſions, ought frequently to reflect, that they are the continual puniſhment of thoſe who are governed by them: that their ſlaves are infallibly criminal, whilſt they entail misfortune on their objects; and that they, who are guided by them, are deſpiſed by the villains, who profit by their weakneſs, and pitied by the good, who carefully avoid them. But, my friend, I conceive your impatience. Depart for Conſtantinople: go where love calls you; but, in the name of God, be prudent: and may that love be at laſt rewarded, which heaven has ſo long ſeemed to oppoſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

JOURNEY TO CONSTANTINOPLE. FINDS HIS BELOVED.

THE reader will, perhaps, be ſurprized to find me enlarging on circumſtances, which muſt as yet appear to him foreign to the hiſtory of my life; but we ſhall ſoon ſee how cloſely they are connected with it. Had I not drawn his attention to the adventures of Fatima and Salmoni, it would have been impoſſible for him to have traced the ſource of my firſt misfortunes.

It is eaſily imagined, that Salmoni delayed his departure no longer than he was compelled to do it, by his weakneſs, and the gratitude he owed the conſul. In two days every thing was ready for his voyage. They ſeparated with tears in their eyes, and the veſſel ſet ſail with a fair wind for the Archipelago.

Whilſt Salmoni remained at Fez, the Neapolitan had taught him the Turkiſh language, ſo as to enable him to converſe tolerably well in it. The conſul adviſed him to aſſume the habit of that nation, to make him leſs liable to be ſuſpected, and facilitate his enterprize. He had even preſented him many rich dreſſes of their faſhion. Salmoni himſelf was in eaſy circumſtances: he had two truſty ſlaves, for whom he was alſo indebted to the conſul: thus his equipage, generoſity, and elegant carriage, gave

gave him the appearance of a young Turk of diſtinction travelling for amuſement.

On his arrival at Conſtantinople he took a lodging near the moſque of Ibrahim, and gave himſelf out for a young merchant of the province of Romelia. Conforming in every thing to the cuſtoms of the country, no one ſuſpected him for a Chriſtian in diſguiſe.

I was at this time two months old. A ſlight indiſpoſition, with which the ſultana, my mother, was attacked, induced the affectionate Achmet to require her conſent, that I ſhould be removed to the quarter of the old ſeraglio, till ſhe was perfectly recovered. Hitherto I had never quitted her apartment: but my infant cries awoke her frequently in the night, and the diſturbing her

reſt retarded her convaleſcence. Fatima attended me to my habitation. The honour of having me intruſted to her care, placed her, as it were, in the rank of a ſultana: and the great credit ſhe enjoyed, rendered her almoſt a ſovereign, within a certain ſphere.

The extreme ſeverity of the ſeraglio in preventing all communication from without, extends only to thoſe women who are deſtined for the pleaſures of the ſultan. The ſlaves, who are not reſerved for that honour, are leſs ſtrictly watched; and, though they are obliged to be extremely cautious, they do not run the ſame hazard, if they be detected in any infringement of the rules of the place; provided, however, that their correſpondence affect themſelves alone, and that none of the odaliques, whom they ſerve, be concerned in it.

Salmoni

Salmoni was acquainted with this. It was not, therefore, the difficulty of informing Fatima of his arrival, that gave him the moſt diſquiet, but the means of conveying her from the ſeraglio; as that is a crime which never fails to bring inſtant death on both parties, if detected. Other thoughts, too, helped to diſtreſs the tranquillity of his mind. Had not Fatima proved faithleſs to him during an abſence of near ten years? Had ſhe not forgotten him? Had not ſome other lover taken his place in her heart? Had not her tender years, yielding to ſeduction and example, abandoned the religion of her fathers? All theſe fears agitated his mind; and the ſentiments of a premature jealouſy poiſoned the ſatisfaction he received from being ſo near his miſtreſs. He at length determined, however, to put an end to his doubts as ſoon as poſſible; and, if he found Fatima

ſtill worthy of his love, to periſh rather than leave her long in her gorgeous priſon.

The ſecond day after his arrival, walking in the bazar, as is cuſtomary with merchants, he went into the ſhop of a jeweller of Balſora, leſs with an intention of becoming a purchaſer, than from curioſity, and to form an acquaintance, from which he might gather more information of the cuſtoms of Conſtantinople and the ſeraglio. He had ſcarcely been there an hour, when a youth of about twelve years old, richly dreſt, entered the ſhop. Every one roſe with reſpect; and, at his requeſt, the moſt valuable goods were diſplayed before him. He examined ſeveral, which he touched with an ivory wand, that he held in his hand; and the moment he had pointed them out, the merchant reſpectfully placed them

in

in a little baſket covered with brocade, which he had brought with him.

Salmoni approaching one of the perſons preſent, whiſpered him,—I am a ſtranger; inform me, I pray, who is that youth, whom they ſerve with ſo much attention?—It is evident, anſwered the other, that you are a ſtranger, otherwiſe you would not aſk ſuch a queſtion. That boy is one of the *icoglans* of the ſeraglio, that is, one of the pages of his highneſs. He is one of thoſe in the ſervice of the ſlave Fatima, whom the ſultan has appointed governeſs of the young princeſs lately born of the ſultana Aſki; and the jewels which he chooſes are, no doubt, for Fatima, or the young princeſs. At this Salmoni felt no little emotion. He reſolved not to let ſlip ſuch an opportunity, which ſeemed ſent him by heaven. He waited till the young

icoglan

icoglan had left the ſhop: then following him at a diſtance, when he ſaw him out of the bazar, he approached him reſpectfully, and ſaid,—Sweet youth! may our heavenly prophet never ceaſe to look on thee with an eye of kindneſs, or ſhed the dew of bleſſing on thy fate. I am a merchant of Romelia, juſt arrived from India. At Ormus I ſaw a relation of the ſtar of the ſeraglio, the ſublime Fatima, who intruſted to me a preſent for her, compoſed of rich jewels: inform me how I ſhall convey it to her; and in the mean time, do me the favour to accept this ſlight mark of my friendſhip.—

At theſe words he took from his girdle an emerald claſp, and preſented it to the icoglan. The youth took it, and replied,—What you aſk is not difficult: I will acquaint Fatima with it: inform me of your name, that ſhe may know

know to whom ſhe owes this obligation.—My name is not neceſſary, ſaid Salmoni. I have not the preſent about me; it is at my caravanſary; but give her theſe tablets; from them ſhe will diſcover the generous relation who has not forgotten her; and to-morrow, if ſhe will ſend a ſlave to this place, I will deliver to him the jewels.—I will come myſelf, replied the icoglan, and bring you her anſwer. With theſe words he left him.

Salmoni was inconceivably agitated till the return of the icoglan. He did not cloſe his eyes the whole night. It was, indeed, the deciſive moment: the anſwer of Fatima was to be the decree of life or death. Thoſe who have loved truly will eaſily conceive his ſituation. He had found a miſtreſs after a ſeparation of ten years, in queſt of whom he had travelled over all Europe.

rope. He had found her—but, perhaps, was on the point of loſing her for ever. The more he knew ſhe was loaded with wealth and honours, the leſs could he hope, that ſhe would quit thoſe enjoyments for a man, whoſe remembrance had, perhaps, long been effaced from her heart. He would then recall to his mind the virtues of Emilia, the vows ſhe had made him; the firmneſs of her principles, and the deep impreſſion which the firſt ſentiments inſpired by love make on the heart. Thus did he paſs by turns from hope to deſpair; and this day was not leſs cruel to him, than that which ſeparated him from his miſtreſs.

Nor was Fatima leſs at eaſe. The icoglan had carefully acquitted himſelf of his commiſſion. The moment ſhe caſt her eyes on the tablets ſhe knew them. They were a preſent ſhe had

had formerly made her lover. She was, however, ſufficiently miſtreſs of herſelf to conceal her emotion. The ſeraglio, to whoſe cuſtoms ſhe had long been habituated, had taught her the art of commanding her countenance; ſo that neither the women, the eunuchs, nor the young icoglan, who were preſent, had the leaſt ſuſpicion of what was paſſing in her heart. She wrote a few words in Italian on the tablets, and gave them to the icoglan, ſaying,—As you have promiſed to meet this merchant from Romelia to-morrow, return him theſe tablets; he may intruſt you with the jewels, my receipt is written on one of the leaves. The young page received her commands, and promiſed to execute them punctually.

The ſight of theſe tablets had at once revived in the heart of Fatima a flame that had only been ſmothered. That

inſtant the deſire of ſeeing her lover, and quitting the ſeraglio, had taken poſſeſſion of her mind, with a violence capable of making her brave all the dangers awaiting ſuch a deſign.

Salmoni was at the rendezvous long before the icoglan. At length the latter preſented himſelf to his impatient eyes.—Here, ſaid he, is a receipt for your jewels; you may deliver them to me; Fatima has give you an order for them. Salmoni gave into his hands a ſealed caſket; and, burning with deſire to ſee the contents of the tablets, he left the page, after having liberally rewarded him.

The moment he was at liberty he opened the tablets, and read the following words: "If you be really the man whom thoſe tablets announce, your preſence will give me life: there is nothing

nothing I would not do to procure an interview with you: my heart has never changed. Do not run any hazard: leave the care of every thing to me. I will give you notice, at a proper time."

It would be difficult to conceive the joy, the tranſports of Salmoni. Such is the nature of the human heart! a moment of happineſs could inſtantly efface ten years of pain, of misfortune, of fatigue, of grief. He had ventured to incloſe in the caſket a long letter, acquainting Fatima with all that happened to him, and the place where he lodged at Conſtantinople. He was now rejoiced at having taken this ſtep. He flattered himſelf, that the picture of his misfortunes would accelerate the motions of his miſtreſs, and prevent her prolonging his ſufferings by too great delay.

One

One week he paſſed in tolerable tranquillity, without hearing any thing. But when he ſaw a fortnight, a month, two months, elapſed, without the leaſt news of Fatima, then he believed himſelf loſt beyond reſource. The infidelity of his miſtreſs was the leaſt of his ſuſpicions: he fancied, that the icoglan had betrayed them; that, perhaps, Fatima had fallen a victim to his indiſcretion; that ſhe was no more; that he had loſt her for ever. A thouſand times was he tempted to put an end to a life thus cruelly agitated: but hope, that never quits a man but with his laſt breath, held his hand. What ſtill added to his inquietude was his fancying, that he had frequently perceived a man following him. He had aconfuſed idea that the perſon of this man was not totally unknown to him, but whenever he attempted to accoſt, or even approach him, he ſhunned him, and avoided his ſight. This conduct could

could not but diſturb him. If this man had not ſome motive for following him without being diſcovered, would he take ſuch pains to conceal himſelf? Would he not, on the contrary, have endeavoured to ſpeak to, and renew his acquaintance with him? It might be ſome ſpy belonging to the ſeraglio, endeavouring to diſcover if he were not the perſon who had been raſh enough to attempt a correſpondence with a ſlave of the grand ſeignor. He left nothing unattempted to ſee the young icoglan again; but in vain. The youth had never appeared ſince. Perhaps he alſo had been puniſhed for accepting the commiſſion. A thouſand terrible apprehenſions ſucceeded each other in his imagination every inſtant.

He was on the point of ſinking under this ſtate of horrible anxiety, when, as he was ſtanding at the gate of the caravanſary,

caravanſary, a woman, covered with a veil, joſtled him with her elbow, let fall a letter at his feet, and went on without ſtopping. He picks it up haſtily, ſees theſe words, *For Salmoni*, opens it with tranſport, and reads: "If you be not dead with impatience, be ready on the twenty-fifth of the month Giafar. Procure a veſſel to anchor under the walls of the ſeraglio. Provide yourſelf with a ladder forty feet in length, and a long crook, which you will faſten to what you ſee make its appearance over the wall. At midnight be at the foot of the wall, oppoſite the place where you perceive two tall trees riſing far above the others. Your anſwer will be expected to-morrow at the place where you receive this."

He had been on the point of dying with anxiety: he was on the point of loſing his ſenſes at reading this billet.

He

He read it over ten times, wept, laughed, danced, played all the extravagant tricks of which a man desperately in love, passing suddenly from the depth of despair to the height of joy, is capable. When he became a little calm, he thought of making all the necessary preparations. He had no time to lose: for there were but seven days before the time appointed would arrive.

The next day he took care to be at the gate. The same woman passed him. He held his billet. The woman stretched out her hand from under the veil, took the billet, and went on without saying a word.

Fatima was extremely afraid, that her long silence would have repulsed her lover. She had been no less a prey to anxiety than himself. The physicians of the seraglio had prescribed the country

country air to Aſki, as neceſſary to the re-eſtabliſhment of her health. In conſequence of this, ſhe had paſſed near two months in a pleaſure houſe of the ſultan, ſituated on the borders of the Dead Sea. She would not let me be ſeparated from her, and Fatima was obliged to follow her. Fortunately the love of Achmet, who could not long ſupport the abſence of Aſki, had recalled her; and the day after her return, Fatima, who would not intruſt the intereſts of her love to any one, ſtole out of the ſeraglio, and it was ſhe who had ſhewn herſelf veiled to Salmoni.

The lover did not loſe a moment. He repaired to Pera * to hire a light veſſel. Knowing that the French are naturally more enterprizing than any other

* A ſuburb of Conſtantinople, where the Chriſtians uſually reſide.

nation;

nation; that their word, when they have once pledged it, may be relied on; that they are even more adroit in taking the ſteps neceſſary to crown an enterprize with ſucceſs, than intrepid in a *coup de main*; and that they unite coolneſs amidſt danger, to the forwardneſs of courage, he gave the preference to one of that nation. He engaged with a young captain from Dieppe, who was maſter of a ſmall veſſel belonging to Bayonne, carrying only four ſailors, on whoſe fidelity and reſolution he could rely. The ſimilarity of their characters ſoon formed a friendſhip between them; which Salmoni ſtrengthened by a magnificent preſent, and the promiſe of a liberal recompence when they arrived at Genoa. He made no ſecret to him of the buſineſs being to carry off a miſtreſs; and the Frenchman, who poſſeſſed that frankneſs which is natural to his countrymen, was ſtill more ſenſible of this mark

of

of confidence, than of the flattering promiſes of his young friend. To prevent ſuſpicion, he took upon himſelf to procure the ladder and the crook; and every thing was conducted with ſuch diligence, that the ſixth day, in the evening, the veſſel anchored at the place appointed.

Fatima had been no leſs active on her part. The women of the ſeraglio had, for their amuſement, procured a ſwing to be hung between the two trees mentioned in the letter. Fatima intended to profit by this. As her power was very great, ſhe had eaſily obtained of the *boſtangi bachi* to have the ſwing raiſed much higher than it had been, in order, as ſhe pretended, to enjoy the grand proſpect of Conſtantinople, appearing at a diſtance like an amphitheatre. But this was merely a pretext. She imagined that this ſwing, elevated above the garden

den wall, would contribute to her deliverance. A ladder was neceſſary to aſcend the ſwing, which was eaſily diſengaged when the perſon was ſeated. The motion given to the ſwing readily carried it beyond the wall: the crook, which Salmoni was to procure, would faſten to one of the arms of the ſwing, and thus fix it till ſhe had deſcended by means of the ladder, which he was alſo to procure. This ſcheme pleaſed her the more, as it left no trace of her flight.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

EMILIA'S ESCAPE FROM THE SERAGLIO. STEALS THE DAUGHTER OF ACHMET.

AT length the eve of the day fixed for her departure arrived. Hitherto the idea of taking me with her had never entered her mind. In the evening ſhe went with ſome others of the women to amuſe herſelf with the ſwing. She obſerved the little veſſel, and made no doubt but that it was intended for her.

She

She returned to the ſeraglio. She had long been accuſtomed to diſmiſs the ſlaves that waited on her at nine o'clock. She ſhut herſelf up with me in her apartment: it was on the ground floor: the windows looked into the garden; and as it formed the end of the building, the halls that were before it, in which the eunuchs kept watch, did not command a view of this garden. All theſe circumſtances contributed to facilitate her project.

I was then ſix months old, and Fatima was tenderly attached to me. When ſhe reflected, that ſhe was going to be ſeparated from me, ſhe could not avoid feeling an emotion, that abated the happineſs ſhe promiſed herſelf. The innocent careſſes of infancy have a ſeducing charm. Fatima loved me as if I were her own child; and the certainty that ſhe ſhould never ſee me again, was infinitely

infinitely diſtreſſing to a heart naturally replete with tenderneſs.

I have ſaid, that ſhe had preſerved a ſincere attachment to religion. Surrounded by Mahometiſm, ſhe had preſerved herſelf from the ſnare; and performed, in ſecret, but with ſtrictneſs, all the duties of her faith. She had one of thoſe pious toys, called, in Italy, roſaries, which ſhe had the art to conceal. When ſhe was alone, ſhe recited, with devotion, the prayers it preſcribes.

This evening, the moment ſhe was at liberty, ſhe placed herſelf on her knees, as uſual, before my cradle. Embracing me, with a torrent of tears, dear unfortunate child, ſaid ſhe, it is but to-morrow when I am to quit thee for ever. There will be one in the world who will have loved thee with the utmoſt tenderneſs, of whom thou will not

not preſerve even the ſlighteſt remembrance. Never ſhall I hear thy name without tears, whilſt mine will be heard by thee with the utmoſt indifference. O God! whom I adore! ſhower down thy bleſſings on her head; and if ſhe be unhappily born in a faith which thou rejecteſt, inſpire into her heart ſuch virtues, that, at the dreadful day of judgement, ſhe may find grace before the throne of thy mercy!

Fatima, continuing her prayer, added thoſe preſcribed by her roſary, and, leaning over my cradle, mingled the tears of affection with the fervour of devotion. During this time my little hands were playing with her roſary, and, by a natural movement, I carried to my lips the crucifix which hung to it. This movement was a ray of light to Fatima. What! cowardly Chriſtian that I am! exclaimed ſhe, the fate of

this

this infant is in my hands; it is in my power to ſnatch her out of the jaws of idolatry, and place her in the lap of truth, and I fear to attempt it! To neglect it would be a crime, and I ſhould bring upon myſelf the puniſhment it would deſerve. O, great God! thou haſt juſt led innocence itſelf to adore thee: and I, to whom reaſon ought to ſhow all the extent of thy rights, ſhould I refuſe to be the inſtrument of thy auguſt deſigns, I ſhould deſerve to be for ever purſued by thy vengeance, and to be buried in the waves of that ſea, to which I am juſt going to intruſt myſelf. No, I will obey thee, O my God! I will guide this infant into the boſom of thy church; I will teach her to know the light of thy truth; nor will I be the guilty deſtroyer of a ſoul whom thy juſtice placed in the hands of a Chriſtian for the wiſeſt purpoſes. Of what, indeed, ſhall I deprive her? Of that

vain empty grandeur, which vaniſhes like a miſt in the morning: of the affections of conſanguinity, faint ſhadow of thy paternal goodneſs: of the dwelling of pleaſures, that, under the maſk of happineſs, ſerve only to poiſon the cup of life: of thoſe afflictions, perhaps, that wound the ſoul, from which it receives no advantage to compenſate its pangs, when its views are not directed towards thee. Ought theſe conſiderations to prevent my purpoſe?—My own dangers ſpeak ſtill more faintly to me. Thy grace, O God! will ſerve me as an Ægis; and when her parents ſhall demand of me, at the foot of thy throne, an account of the truſt committed to my charge, I will ſhew them the God of the univerſe, covering her with his immortal glory, and will ſay to them, Dare to accuſe me now!

Theſe reflections occupied the mind of Fatima all the night, and confirmed her in the reſolution of making me the companion of her flight. Whilſt ſhe thought of her own eſcape only, the care of her fortune was unheeded; but the moment ſhe determined on taking me away, brought other duties to her mind. It was not poſſible that my birth ſhould always remain concealed: ſhe ought, at leaſt, to ſet me above indigence, and put me in a ſituation not to be compelled to have recourſe to the aſſiſtance of ſtrangers. With this view ſhe collected all her jewels; and all thoſe which the muſſulman magnificence had laviſhed on me at my birth. For theſe ſhe might expect above a million (near 50,000 ſterling) on her arrival in Europe, which would be ſufficient to place me out of the reach of want.

I will

I will not inquire whether the zeal of Fatima carried her too far, or were ſtrictly within the bounds of equity; but I admire the aſtoniſhing courage we derive from the Chriſtian religion. The moſt dreadful tortures would have attended the diſcovery of ſuch a project. Fatima could not be ignorant of this; yet a timid woman, without advice, without aſſiſtance, without a confidant, without a protector, has the courage to brave the danger, meditates on it with tranquillity, and forms her reſolution with chearfulneſs. Surely this is beyond the power of nature! nor did ſhe wrong me. That religion has amply recompenſed my loſſes, and has ſpoken to my ſoul with ſuch energy, as to make me bleſs the hand which took me from all that man conſiders as the ſource of happineſs.

Fatima did not forget the ſetſa, with which the ſultans cover their children at their birth, and which is the ſacred and authentic proof of their high deſcent. It is a large piece of yellow ſattin, on which the names of the ſultan, the mother, and the child, the day and hour of its birth, various paſſages of the Alcoran, prayers to Mahomet, &c. are embroidered in letters of gold. All muſſulmen are obliged to proſtrate themſelves at the ſight of this ſetſa, and defend, with their lives, the perſon who poſſeſſes it. We ſhall ſee hereafter, that it preſerved me from, perhaps, the moſt imminent danger to which I was ever expoſed.

At length the ſo much wiſhed for evening arrived. Fatima diſmiſſed her attendants at an early hour, as uſual. When ſhe was alone, ſhe wrapped me up very carefully to defend me from the evening

evening air. She had taken the precaution to give me a doſe of opium, the uſe of which is common in the eaſt, leſt the motion, or interruption of my ſleep, ſhould make me cry. This occaſioned me to ſleep ſoundly. When ſhe heard the minarets proclaim ten o'clock, ſhe opened ſoftly one of the windows, that faced the garden. She had taken care to extinguiſh the light in her apartment, leſt it ſhould attract the attention of any one without. Yet a kind of diſmay, not to be overcome in thoſe moments, in which we are, as it were, between life and death; the approach of danger, which always ſeems greater as it is more nigh; the darkneſs of the night, which fills our minds with phantoms, whilſt it is our ſafe guard; ſilence, the ſon of terror, who promiſes to lull the attention of an Argus, whilſt he is favourable to it; all united to agitate her mind. She was on the point of

ſinking: a few drops of a cordial elixir recalled her fainting ſoul. The hour approached. Collecting all her courage, ſhe took me from my cradle. Falling on her knees, and lifting me up towards heaven, O God! ſaid ſhe, this is thy work; protect her with thy omnipotent arm, and give me ſtrength to accompliſh my purpoſe! and thou, unhappy child, reproach me not hereafter with what I do for thee; and if Providence will that thou ſink under the dangers to which I am about to expoſe thee, carry at leaſt to the grave that ſacred character, which, purifying the ſoul, claims its reward! At theſe words, ſlightly ſprinkling my forehead with water, Maria Cecilia, ſaid ſhe, I baptize thee in the name of the heavenly Trinity. Then, making a laſt attempt, ſhe leaped from the window, and flew ſwiftly acroſs the garden.

The

The place appointed was at ſome diſtance from her apartment. She ſtopped a few moments in ſome arbours, near the trees from which the ſwing was ſuſpended, to take breath. The weather was clear and ſerene: the moon began to appear above the horizon, and caſt a faint light, heightening the grandeur of the face of nature, always majeſtic in the ſtillneſs of night. Fatima liſtened with attention; and the profound ſilence, that reigned around, left her no room to doubt her flight's being undiſcovered. At length, a little encouraged from this reflection, ſhe approached the two tall trees, ſole and ſecret witneſſes of her bold enterpriſe.

When ſhe was at the foot of the ladder, by which ſhe was to mount up to the ſwing, her embarraſſment was extreme. An unforeſeen circumſtance was very near diſconcerting her ſcheme.

The ladder was perpendicular. The ſwing, naturally moveable, rendered the ladder equally ſo, and both hands were of courſe neceſſary to aſcend it. I was in her arms: how, then, could ſhe aſcend the ladder? A few minutes, that paſſed during this perplexity, were, as ſhe has ſince told me, the moſt cruel of her life; nor could ſhe conceive how ſhe ſurvived the agony ſhe then felt. But it is in great extremities that invention comes to our aſſiſtance. She took off a ſcarf, which ſhe wore. Paſſing it over and under my arms, ſhe placed me on her back; then bringing the two ends of the ſcarf over my ſhoulders, and croſſing them on her breaſt, ſhe paſſed them round my legs, and tied them faſt before. Thus having both her hands at liberty, ſhe reached the top of the ladder, though with extreme difficulty; for, being perpendicular

cular and moveable, the weight, which ſhe carried on her ſhoulders, frequently throwing her backwards, very near occaſioned her falling.

When ſhe was ſeated on the ſwing, ſhe did not ſtay to unlooſe me; but diſengaging the ladder, ſhe took care to carry it gently againſt the wall, by a ſlight motion of the ſwing, leſt its noiſe, in falling, ſhould alarm the janiſſaries, who frequently watch without the walls of the ſeraglio. Reſting a moment, to calm the agitation into which the laſt difficulty had thrown her, ſhe caſt her eyes towards the ſeraglio, the immenſe extent of which was, in this ſituation, open to her view. The profound ſtillneſs there convinced her, that her flight was unſuſpected. At a diſtance ſhe perceived light in the windows of Aſki. At that inſtant the kindneſſes of the ſultana, and the enormity of the

theft ſhe was committing, flaſhed on her mind with their full force. Theſe cutting reflections almoſt annihilated her reſolution. Tears guſhed from her eyes, and ſhe was on the point of relinquiſhing her deſign. But love and religion conquered, and giving a ſtrong motion to the ſwing, it was ſoon perceived by thoſe who waited without. At the ſecond motion the ready crook ſeized one of its arms; the other end was inſtantly fixed to ſome iron hooks, that had been driven into the outſide of the wall; the ladder was placed, and Fatima was on the ſhore in a moment.

A man, wrapped in a grey cloak, that came down to his feet, whoſe face was concealed by a large hat, received her in his arms. Fatima, eſcaped ſafe from the midſt of ſo many dangers, thinking it to be Salmoni, hung on his neck

neck, and giving way to the firſt tranſports of joy, preſt him tenderly in her arms. Let us loſe no time, ſaid the man to her in Italian, in a low voice; we will preſently give way to our tranſports: let us make our eſcape; we may be ſurprized; we have but a ſtep to the boat; you ſee there the ſailors waiting for me.

Fatima prepared to follow him, and was leaning on his arm to aſſiſt her ſteps, when a man, running with all his ſpeed, joined them. Traitor! cried he, and inſtantly plunged a poniard, which he held in his hand, up to the hilt, in the boſom of that man who was with Fatima. In his haſte, the poniard ſlightly wounded me in the neck: the pain awoke me, and I gave a faint cry. The aſſaſſin then ran off; and Fatima fell ſenſeleſs near her guide, who lay dead on the ſpot, weltering in his blood.

The French captain and his ſailors, who were at hand, ran up. The light of the moon being then ſufficient to diſtinguiſh objects, the captain lifted up the hat of the murdered man, and, perceiving that it was not his friend, left him on the ſhore, and cauſed Fatima and me to be immediately conveyed on board. As ſoon as we were in the veſſel, perceiving at a diſtance ſome flambeaux, that ſeemed approaching, and fearing the appearance of a dead body would give riſe to ſome ſuſpicions, he cut his cable, and put to ſea immediately. A breeze ſetting off from the land, we, in a few hours, loſt ſight of Conſtantinople.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

ARRIVAL AT GENOA.
BAPTISM OF MARIA CECILIA.

THE firſt care of the captain was to dreſs my wound. He then beſtowed all his attention on Fatima, who was, at length, recalled to life. Where am I? ſaid ſhe. And my child, where is it? They gave me into her arms, and that ſeemed a little to revive her. All is not loſt then! but O unfortunate Salmoni!

moni! was this to be the reward of thy love? Quiet yourſelf, madam, ſaid the captain, we are far enough from Conſtantinople to have nothing to fear: were they to diſpatch a veſſel after us, I defy the beſt ſailor they have to come up with us. I can add ſomething too, which, I believe, will be ſtill more pleaſing: if your tears flow for the death of Salmoni, I can anſwer for his being alive, and that you have nothing to fear on that head. Ah! do not endeavour to flatter my grief, replied ſhe: I ſaw him fall dead at my feet; and the hand, that gave the wound, was too ſure, to leave me any hopes.—There is a myſtery, ſaid the captain, which I cannot explain; but the truth is, that the man who was murdered by your ſide was not Salmoni.—O God! Salmoni is alive! who then was that man?—I know not; but, however, it is very fortunate, that we were before the time appointed;

appointed; for if we had waited till midnight, according to the order we received, you would have been loſt.—What ſay you? midnight! Salmoni's billet ſaid eleven o'clock: here it is. She preſented it to the captain: they examined it with care, and perceived a circumſtance, which had hitherto eſcaped the notice of Fatima; the word *midnight* had been eraſed, and *eleven at night* ſubſtituted in its place by another hand.

This myſtery completed the agitation of Fatima's mind. She learnt, it is true, that her lover was alive; but ſhe painted him to herſelf arriving at midnight, his aſtoniſhment, his deſpair, expoſed to the greateſt dangers, perhaps ſuſpected, known, ſeized, and condemned to death, for having favoured her flight, rendered ſtill more criminal by taking me away. It was decreed by

fate,

fate, that ſhe ſhould die in ignorance of the ſecret movements which produced this event; and that I ſhould diſcover them near thirty years afterwards.

We had a good paſſage, and arrived at Genoa ten days after we left Conſtantinople. The firſt care of Fatima was to inquire after her father. She learnt, that he was ſtill living, notwithſtanding the grief which had continually preyed on his mind ſince the loſs of his daughter. Unable to reſtrain her impatience, ſhe took a carriage inſtantly to convey her into the country, whither her father had retired immediately after the unfortunate event which had torn her from him. On her arrival, fearing that the ſudden joy might be fatal to him, ſhe announced herſelf as a ſtranger, who had brought news of his daughter. But nature, ſeldom the dupe of ſuch precautions, ſpoke too ſtrongly

to

to the father's heart. Ah! my daughter, my dear daughter! cried he, flying to meet her, and claſping her in his arms. In ſuch a moment, what tranſports, tears, tender ſenſations, broken words, and interrupted queſtions, are mingled together! at ſuch a time the goodneſs of the heart may be diſcovered in the exceſs of its diſorder; all its plies are unfolded; and we muſt at leaſt conſider him, who can calmly ſupport ſuch a criſis of nature, or behold ſuch a ſcene unmoved, as an unfeeling ſtoic, if we do not ſuſpect his virtue.

My preſence, however, allayed the joy of the good old man. Haſt thou then forgotten, ſaid he to his daughter, what thy love to Salmoni, the reſpect due to thy father, and thy holy religion, required of thee? And haſt thou formed ties offenſive to all theſe? To remove his ſuſpicions, ſhe related immediately

mediately all that had happened to her, all ſhe knew of Salmoni, her eſcape from the ſeraglio, the tragic ſcene that followed, and laſtly my noble birth, and her zeal for Chriſtianity, which had induced her to carry me off.

The father, ſatisfied with this explanation, praiſed his daughter's courage. They agreed, however, to conceal the laſt circumſtance from the public for ſome time, leſt the Ottoman Porte ſhould take any means with the different European courts to find me; as it was to be feared, that, political intereſt having greater weight with them than the ſalvation of my ſoul, they would take me from the arms of her who had run ſo many dangers on my account.

The relations of Emilia, to whom I ſhall henceforth give no other name, and thoſe of Salmoni, ſoon arrived. The tranſports

ſports of joy were renewed, and tears again began to flow. The uncertainty of Salmoni's fate diſturbed the pleaſure of Emilia's return. Her heart felt it moſt ſeverely. What was ſhe to think of the man, who received her in his arms at the foot of the ladder, and was not Salmoni? Was it this unfortunate lover, who, in a tranſport of rage, ſtabbed that man? If ſo, ſhe muſt appear unfaithful in the eyes of the man ſhe loved; and this idea drove her to diſtraction. She could more eaſily have born Salmoni's inconſtancy than this ſuppoſition; for to love a man to the utmoſt, to have ſacrificed every thing to prove that love, and yet, though innocent, to forfeit his eſteem, is, perhaps, the moſt inſupportable of all tortures to a heart poſſeſſed of virtue and ſenſibility. We mourn the inconſtancy or coolneſs of a lover, but we conſole ourſelves, becauſe to pleaſe is not always in our power: but

but we may command eſteem, and, if we forfeit that, it muſt be our own fault.

Different veſſels going to Conſtantinople, were charged to inquire privately after Salmoni, but their inquiries were in vain; and Emilia ſorrowing hoped from Providence the unfolding of a myſtery, which it alone could diſcloſe. All her tenderneſs was turned towards me, and centered, as it were, in me alone. She had liberally rewarded the French captain; and, thus acquitted of her debt to him, my education took up all her attention.

Her firſt care was to procure me the ceremonies of baptiſm, which ſhe had adminiſtered to me as well as ſhe was able, on quitting the ſeraglio. As ſhe and her father were agreed on the ſecreſy neceſſary to be preſerved at that time,

time, ſhe went to the rector of St. Eulalie, at Genoa, and, after having reconciled herſelf to the church, ſhe diſcloſed my ſtory to that gentleman. He approved the cautions which had been taken; at the ſame time pointing out the neceſſity of baptiſing me by the name of my parents, as an inconteſtable proof of my birth, in caſe my title ſhould in future be diſputed.

It was agreed, that the world ſhould be left to ſuppoſe, that I was the daughter of a Turk of rank, whoſe parents were dead; and that Emilia, who was my governeſs, had brought me into Italy, rather than leave me in a *hamlet* in Turkey, in the hands of ſlaves, who might have diſpoſed of me as they pleaſed, at ſo tender an age. The rector imparted the ſecret only to my ſponſors, whom, out of reſpect to my rank, he took care to chooſe amongſt

the firſt rank of the citizens of Genoa. The one was a ſenator of the houſe of Doria, the other a princeſs of the illuſtrious houſe of Pamphili, on whoſe piety and diſcretion he could rely.

The ceremony was celebrated with all the pomp and dignity of which ſo auguſt a ſacrament is worthy, in the preſence of an immenſe concourſe of ſpectators, drawn together by ſo unuſual a circumſtance. The cannons of the caſtle, ramparts, and port of Genoa, proclaimed it by frequent diſcharges, during the whole day. The republic diſputed with my ſponſors the honour of the expence. As ſoon as the night arrived, the whole city was illuminated. At nine o'clock the doge, and all his court, the foreign miniſters, the ſenate, the different orders of the ſtate, and all the people, repaired to the church, which was illuminated up to the cieling by

by an innumerable quantity of wax candles. Immediately after the godfather and godmother arrived at the church, attended by all their families, who endeavoured, by their number and magnificence, to heighten the ſplendour of the day. Getting out of their chairs at a little diſtance from the porch, they advanced towards the ſteps of the church, amidſt the firing of muſquetry. Emilia, dreſſed after the Turkiſh manner, in all the pomp of Aſiatic magnificence, walked between them, carrying me in her arms. The rector, cloathed in all the ornaments of the prieſthood, and preceded by his clergy, came to meet them without the periſtyle. The dignity of his appearance induced a profound ſilence. Taking me in his arms, he aſcended the ſteps of the porch, and turning towards the people, ſaid: Fellow Chriſtians let us pray to that God whom we worſhip, the God who

who created the earth and the ſea, the one only God of the univerſe, to open the gates of mercy to this infant, whom he has deigned to call to the light of his truth by ſuch wonderful ways; and to grant that her heart may ever be filled with thoſe virtues, which the healing waters of baptiſm are about to pour on her ſoul. On his re-entering the church, a numerous orcheſtra performed an oratorio, the ſubject of which was the ſaving of Moſes by Pharaoh's daughter. During this time the baptiſmal ceremony was performed; and I received the name of Maria Cecilia, which Emilia had given me, or rather it was confirmed to me. A general diſcharge of all the artillery concluded this religious feſtival; and the doge and ſenate, laying their hands on my forehead, ſwore to be my protectors till death.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

HER EDUCATION.
ADVENTURE AT A CONVENT.

EMILIA, having thus discharged the first duties she owed me, turned into money all the jewels which she brought from Constantinople. With the greater part of this she purchased an annuity on my life; another part she laid by, lest circumstances should oblige me to travel; and with the remainder

ſhe ſecured a moderate income to herſelf, to place herſelf out of the reach of my ingratitude, if, at an advanced age, I ſhould be capable of abandoning her.

She then gave herſelf up intirely to the care of my education. My firſt years were paſſed in her arms: I loved her as a mother; I called her by that name; and ſhe beſtowed on me the tender title of daughter. I muſt do her the juſtice to avow, that, though ſhe fondly loved me, it was not a blind fondneſs: it was tempered by a prudent ſeverity, which planted in my boſom the ſeeds of virtue. Reaſon dictated and accompanied her moſt trifling leſſons. She always endeavoured to conquer and eradicate a kind of haughtineſs that was natural to me. She pointed out to me the difference between that which ariſes from dignity of

ſentiment

ſentiment in a woman, and which is a virtue, and that which ſprings from a miſtaken and contemptible pride, which is a vice. The imperious voice of noble blood awakened in me this haughtineſs, of which, thanks to Emilia, I have preſerved only ſufficient to command reſpect: but, it may be preſumed, had I been educated in the palace of my anceſtors, ſurrounded with ſlaves and flatterers, this haughtineſs would have been a blot in that character, whoſe luſtre it has now ſerved only to heighten.

Emilia, looking forward, ſaw that I could not always remain concealed; but that curioſity, policy, or other motives, would come to ſeek me in my retreat, and force me to appear on the ſtage of the world. She took care, therefore, that I ſhould learn the different languages of Europe; and, at ſeven years

old, I could ſpeak French, German, and Italian, tolerably well. Emilia often converſed with me in the Turkiſh language; and, whether it were owing to nature, or the diſpoſition of my organs, I learnt that tongue with a ſingular facility. I am led to believe, that philoſophers have not ſufficiently attended to thoſe tints of birth and country in the human frame, or endeavoured to diſcover the rank and nation of people from their inclinations and diſpoſitions. The chain would be difficult, perhaps, to ſeize; as the paſſions, which are natives of every climate, would tend to conceal many links; but theſe tints would, no doubt, be moſt ſtrong, and moſt eaſily diſcoverable in infancy, when we are the leaſt removed from nature. The haughtineſs of my diſpoſition, and the ideas of my mind, would have betrayed my ſecret.

The

The gentleneſs of Emilia's precepts was occaſionally mixed with a kind of auſterity. I ſometimes ſtubbornly refuſed obedience to what ſhe required of me: this led her to endeavour to diſcover what would make an impreſſion on me; and, unhappily, they who have the care of children, are not always ſufficiently cautious of the means they employ. The moſt trifling things produce ſurpriſing effects on the infantile mind, and leave traces never to be effaced. Theſe, it is true, at a more advanced age, are but phantoms which reaſon combats; but does reaſon always come off victorious? Even if ſhe do, the victory is ſeldom without pain; and thus imprudent tutors procure laſting trouble to their pupils.

A very old, tall, meagre man, with an enormous long, buſhy, white beard, whom Emilia's father kept out of chari-

ty, by chance met me: I was frightened at the ſight of him. One day, as I was refuſing to obey Emilia in ſomething, ſhe inconſiderately threatened me with this old man: fear made me comply. The ſame means were frequently employed with ſucceſs; and, to have greater effect, the reality was joined to the threat. The old man appeared before me without ſpeaking a word: he looked at me a moment with eyes that then appeared to me dreadful; and when my terror was excited ſo far, that Emilia thought my ſpirit ſubdued, this kind of ſpectre retired.

The cruel impreſſion left on my mind by this mode of correction is incredible. I retain an involuntary terror at the unexpected appearance of an old man; and thus have been driven almoſt to hate the moſt beautiful ſight in nature. Yes, I repeat it, the moſt beautiful ſight

ſight in nature; the majeſtic beauty of old age, when heightened by the ſplendour of virtue. What a ſource of reflection, what a noble leſſon, is the ſight of an old man! at his appearance let the mind meaſure the ſpan of life: what is it but a point between the cradle and the tomb? And this point, what does it exhibit? Paſſion at variance with virtue. If virtue have not been triumphant, this point evaniſhes: the cradle touches the grave; it is as if we had never been.

I relate this anecdote of my infancy, only to give an idea of the caution we ought to uſe with reſpect to the impreſſions we make on the mind in ſo tender an age. Puſillanimity, inſenſibility, credulity, weak antipathies, and, perhaps, a crowd of phyſical evils, whoſe cure is out of the reach of art, as their ſource is out of the ken of ob-

ſervation, ſpring from no other ſource. I dare aſſert, that humanity does not ſufficiently preſide over our care of infancy; and that the pride of the maſter too often uſurps the place of ſenſibility, both in his inſtructions, and in his mode of inſtructing.

This fault is, perhaps, the only one with which I can reproach Fatima. I now drew near my tenth year. I already diſplayed ſigns of that beauty, which rare, but frivolous, advantage, gives happineſs to ſo many women; but, I am perſuaded, only diminiſhed mine. Had I been leſs handſome, I ſhould have equally fixed the heart of a deſerving man, who would have loved only me. Poſſeſſed of every attractive charm, I had many admirers, who loved only themſelves. I have learnt, that beauty, of which women are ſo deſirous, is but a thick veil, conceal-

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ing from them the hearts of their lovers.

Emilia now thought of placing me in a convent, to prepare me for the laſt myſtery which conſecrates us totally to the Chriſtian religion. She choſe the Benedictines, with whom ſhe herſelf had received her education; and the purity of whoſe manners, and ſolidity of whoſe principles, are every where juſtly praiſed. Unwilling to quit me, ſhe accompanied me in my retreat. She thought the ſecret of my birth a confidence due to the abbeſs. In ſpite of the injunctions, with which it was intruſted to her, the abbeſs could not avoid imparting it to ſome friends of her heart: theſe did the ſame to others; and in one day, there was not a ſoul in the convent, from the director down to the loweſt *tourriere*, who did not know, that the daughter of a Turkiſh emperor was

within their walls. I will leave the reader to judge of the aſtoniſhing work this made in our retreat. The daughter of a Turk! ſays one; how can the daughter of a Turk have ſuch fine eyes? Is it not true, my ſweet angel, ſays another to me, that they eat men in your country? One was wondering at my mouth, another at my ſhape, which were juſt like thoſe of Europeans. Here, was a debate whether it were decent to keep me, as I was not the offſpring of a lawful marriage: there, mother St. Agnes was exclaiming againſt the archbiſhop of my country, for ſuffering my father to lead ſuch a licentious life: and mother St. Modeſte, who had been ſhut up in the convent for fifty years, could not conceive how a Turk could be barbarous enough to keep women confined. I ſtood ſtupefied at this curious converſation, whilſt mother de l'Humilite was recollecting how

how many daughters of ſovereigns had reſided in the houſe ſince its foundation.

This indiſcretion, of which Emilia was not aware, deranged a little the plan ſhe had formed of concealing my birth till I ſhould arrive at years of diſcretion: at the ſame time it overturned all my ideas, by teaching me, that I was not her daughter. This diſcovery I own afflicted me. We know no want in youth but that of an innocent affection: we liſten only to the tender ſentiments of the heart: we are contented with the happineſs we poſſeſs, nor have we acquired the unfortunate power of creating imaginary ones. Emilia, who eaſily perceived the ſituation of my mind, conſoled me with the moſt tender careſſes. Of what conſequence is it, ſays ſhe, whether I be really your mother or not, if I have for you the af-

ſection of one, and you never knew another? The fear of our being ſome day ſeparated afflicts you, my dear child; a fear moſt pleaſing to me. But make yourſelf eaſy; death alone ſhall ſeparate us. You have reaſon, nor are you ignorant. Have I not ſhown you in the hiſtory of the Romans, whom you ſo much admire, that thoſe conquerors of the world were accuſtomed to adopt the children of others, and transfer to them that affection which they would have felt for their own? I have done the ſame: you are my child by adoption. Do you complain of my attachment? If you ſuppoſe a mother would feel a greater, you deceive yourſelf. Dry up your tears, then, or I ſhall ſuppoſe that Cecilia no longer loves me; that ſhe is deſirous of quitting me to find another parent.

How

How many ſimple and innocent careſſes did I employ to remove that ſuſpicion, which ſhe artfully let me ſee only to prevent queſtions that ſhe wiſhed yet to elude! She was deſirous, and not without reaſon, that my education ſhould be finiſhed before the veil was removed, which concealed me from myſelf: ſhe knew too well, that the pride of greatneſs often ſtifles the beſt diſpoſitions.

During three years ſpent in this retreat, I learnt, both by precept and example, all the ſolidity of the Chriſtian virtues: I acquired thoſe agreeable talents, which are ſo neceſſary in the world: my mind was poliſhed by the ſociety I kept; I knew the art of making myſelf beloved, and the neceſſity of being amiable. The boarders enjoyed a decent liberty, and were indulged in all thoſe pleaſures that are reconcileable with

with purity of manners. At one time they all mixed together in ſome innocent play; at another they divided into ſeparate companies, for converſation or entertainments. Sometimes a nun would be preſent at, and take part in, their recreations, which, whilſt ſhe watched over them, ſhe would frequently render more agreeable. I never entered into any of theſe diverſions without Emilia; and ſhe, with an infinite complaiſance, would frequently endeavour to procure me amuſements, that could not but be very inſipid to a mind wholly filled with a deep-rooted paſſion: for ſuch was hers for Salmoni, notwithſtanding thirteen years of abſence.

I cannot avoid relating a pleaſant adventure, which happened to us in one of theſe parties. Amuſing the reader is, perhaps, leſs my motive, than to guard the public againſt lending an ear

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to ſcandalous reports, when they relate to perſons, whoſe ſituation and manners ſeem to render them leſs obnoxious to ſuſpicion. If the tale I am about to recite, had got abroad into the world, in what colours would it have been painted? and yet it aroſe from the moſt innocent circumſtance.

Amongſt the connexions I had formed, I was particularly intimate with a young Genoeſe boarder, a girl of quality, born to a conſiderable fortune. Her apartment was ſituated at the extremity of one of the wings of the convent. A window in her cloſet looked into the ſtreet; but being extremely lofty, prevented any ſuſpicion of a communication from without.

In this apartment we were aſſembled, far from all eyes, and out of the reach of ſcandal. This Genoeſe, three or four other

other boarders. I, Emilia, and ſome agreeable nuns, compoſed our little ſociety. We permitted ourſelves ſometimes to exceed the uſual hour of retiring, particularly when a collation was intended: to this we had the abbeſs's conſent. That eſtimable woman, poſſeſſed of the greateſt piety, had none of that rigorous ſcrupuloſity, which oftener ſprings from hypocriſy than true devotion. She knew, that youth has need of ſome recreations to make its duties pleaſing. Such a day, or ſuch an hour, did not make theſe recreations more criminal in her eyes; and whilſt propriety preſided at them, they had eaſily her aſſent. Too wiſe, however, not to reſpect eſtabliſhed prejudices, ſhe exacted the ſtricteſt ſecreſy on theſe innocent parties, and particularly, that we ſhould require no ſervice from the domeſtics of the convent, that could lead to ſuſpicion.

My

My companion had a brother, who loved her tenderly, and frequently viſited her in the *parloir*. She had acquainted him with our little aſſemblies, and the embarraſſment we were under to procure refreſhments after the hour of retiring to reſt. To remedy this inconvenience, he directed a paſtry-cook, near the houſe, whom he well paid, to furniſh his ſiſter with what ſhe might want on theſe occaſions: and that the paſtry-cook might know on what days his ſervices would be required, it was agreed, that a certain ſignal ſhould be placed in the window of the cloſet, which I have mentioned. He had orders to give a look out every day, and when he perceived the ſignal to attend to it. At the hour appointed, uſually nine or ten in the evening, a baſket was let down from the window by means of a cord, and the paſtry-cook filled it with various things proper for an entertainment. The baſket was drawn up, and the little

party

party thus celebrated its nocturnal feaſts, without ſcandal, and without indiſcretion.

Hitherto no accident had interrupted our ſecurity. The carnival was approaching, and we flattered ourſelves with the expectation of paſſing our time agreeably. On an evening appointed, the abbeſs being previouſly acquainted with it, we were aſſembled in this apartment. A tranquil joy reigned amongſt us; and we had promiſed ourſelves not to ſeparate till ſleep obliged us. A comfortable fire, a table neatly ſpread, delicious liquors ſparkling in the glaſſes, bon mots, and ſallies of wit, beginning to circulate, every thing, in ſhort, promiſed us a delightful evening. The hour for letting down the baſket arrived. we ran to the window, opened it merrily, and ſent down our wicker purveyor, wiſhing him a ſafe return. When we

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed him loaded, we drew him up: he appeared more heavy than uſual; we praiſed the kind paſtry-cook, who, thanks to the carnival, had ſurpaſſed himſelf. The deſired handle appeared; each ſeized it; each wiſhed to have the honour of conveying the charge in triumph to the fire ſide. Eagerly uncovering it, what was the firſt object that met our eyes? Heavens! an infant, that appeared to have been born in the courſe of the day. Never did Meduſa's head work a more inſtantaneous effect: we were all transformed into ſo many ſtatues! The nuns felt ſtill more than we the danger of ſuch an adventure, and the conſequences it might produce, of which ridicule was the leaſt to be feared.

The long aſtoniſhment, into which we were thrown, wore off by degrees, and ſpeech gradually returned. O heavens!

heavens! what ſhall we do? What will become of us? were the firſt words that iſſued from every mouth. One was in deſpair, another wept; ſome were for running away; others, who were wiſer, laughed at the adventure.

In the mean while my companion, who was not eaſily diſconcerted, had taken the child out of the baſket, placed it on a ſopha, and, without being noticed in the midſt of our confuſion, had returned to the window, again let down the baſket, and, on a ſudden, made her appearance with the proviſions. This ſight revived our courage, and a few glaſſes of wine opened all our mouths. Twenty different ſchemes were propoſed, and ſtill the laſt the wildeſt. Whilſt all ſpoke at once, there was none to attend.

At

At laſt Emilia, who hitherto had not uttered a word, opened her mouth, and every one was ſilent to liſten to her. What are we all frightened at? ſaid ſhe. If we had any thing to reproach ourſelves with, it would be excuſeable; but nothing is more innocent than this accident. This trifling adventure, ladies, ought to be a leſſon to you, and to teach you, that, in every circumſtance of life, which oppoſes our deſires, or exhibits appearances unfavourable to us, we ought calmly to face the ſtorm, particularly when our conſcience does not reproach us, and we have not our own imprudence to condemn. No misfortune ought to diſturb our tranquillity, eſpecially if we would preſerve that preſence of mind neceſſary to remedy it. The wiſeſt ſtep we can take is to go to the abbeſs: we know the rectitude of her heart, and we are ſure of her eſteem: to relate to her ingenuouſly

ingenuouſly what has happened: to rely on her prudence to repair our miſfortune; and not to be reſtrained by the ſhame of confeſſing what would be uſeleſs to attempt to conceal; an attempt which would expoſe us to ſuſpicions that our innocence would render more painful.

Emilia immediately took a candle, and went ſoftly to the apartment of the abbeſs, whom ſhe requeſted to come to us, without acquainting her with the reaſon. In a few moments they arrived together. Emilia then related what had happened, and the fears that had ſeized us. The abbeſs wiſely turned our fears into a jeſt; then, aſſuming a more ſerious tone, ſhe pointed out to us the vexatious incidents to which whatever bears any relation to intrigue is liable; remarking that it always bears the ſtamp of diſſimulation, which ſooner

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or later, will lead to ſome diſagreeable dilemma; and that we had received the puniſhment our imprudence merited, for over-ſtepping the bounds of that liberty ſhe had given us. Thus, from the moſt trifling events, may we derive leſſons, that take faſt root in the minds of youth.

She ſuppreſſed our night parties for the future, and the next day ſtopped up the cloſet window. The child was placed in ſafe hands, and properly provided for. We afterwards diſcovered that ſome one was going to expoſe the infant at the gate of a church, according to the barbarous cuſtom of thoſe days*; but ſeeing the baſket, hoped to procure a better fate for the poor unfortunate. Our ſociety clubbed together, and the ſum raiſed was ſufficient to procure a

* Would to heaven *we* had not more barbarous cuſtoms now!

decent

decent ſituation for the child, of whom I have never ſince heard. How often does ſlander ſkulk under the mantle of truth, to ſpread its venom? This anecdote may ſerve to caution us, how much we ought to guard againſt liſtening to reports, that affect any one's reputation, with however ſtrong an appearance of truth they may be coloured.

Whilſt we were at the Benedictines convent, Emilia's father died. I had then attained my thirteenth year. So long a ſpace of time having elapſed, left Emilia no hope of ever ſeeing Salmoni. She had now no tie in Genoa, and conſidered travelling as neceſſary to finiſh my education. In ſhowing me the different courts of Europe, ſhe doubted not but I ſhould find a match ſuitable to my preſent fortune, both in birth and rank. She even wiſhed that I ſhould enter the bands of hymen at an early

early period. In this ſhe had my happineſs in view. Too dearly had ſhe experienced how the pleaſures of life are poiſoned by a long and fruitleſs paſſion, not to wiſh to guard me from a ſimilar misfortune. She had ſtudied my character, and had diſcovered that I had a heart capable of the tendereſt attachment. She ſought to crown her work by making this diſpoſition the foundation of my happineſs.

The diſcloſing to me my birth, and a relation of all the events of my infancy, ſhe thought were neceſſary, previous to my entering on a new career. This recital tore open all the wounds of her heart, which time had ſlightly ſkinned over; nor could ſhe finiſh without ſhedding torrents of tears. But ſhe ſpoke to me of the Chriſtian doctrine with ſo much fire, ſo holy an enthuſiaſm, and a ſoul ſo penetrated with

its advantages; ſhe painted, in ſuch lively colours, the certain dangers I ſhould have run in profeſſing the religion of my fathers; ſhe made me feel ſo ſtrongly, whilſt ſhe deſcribed with energy, the nothingneſs of all that I had quitted, and the immenſity of the everlaſting happineſs I had acquired, if I were capable of preſerving it, that my gratitude was unbounded, my attachment was increaſed, and I viewed in her a tender mother, whom Providence itſelf had choſen for me. From that moment I vowed an eternal reſpect to her, in my own breaſt; and I can truly ſay, that I retained it to the laſt inſtant of her life.

She afterwards informed me of her deſign that I ſhould travel. There is no longer a neceſſity for concealing you, ſaid ſhe; you ſhould now appear in Europe, with the grandeur ſuitable to your

your rank. The ſilence kept by the Ottoman Porte on your diſappearing, leaves no room to fear its reſearches after the expiration of thirteen years: the religion which I have made you embrace promiſes you an aſylum in every Chriſtian court: your ſex does not permit you to aſpire to the Turkiſh throne; and reaſons of ſtate, always ſtronger than the ties of blood, will not permit your father, haughty as he is, to expoſe his ſubjects to the doubtful event of war, if he meet a refuſal from any power of whom he may reclaim you. You may ſhow yourſelf, therefore, without riſk, to the world as the daughter of Achmet III. who has had the courage to prefer the light of truth to all the deceitful ſplendour of human greatneſs. If there be any danger, it is mine alone. The vengeance of your father may reach me any where; and, if he give way to his reſentment, it would be

difficult, if not impoſſible, for me to eſcape it. If this be the caſe, replied I, why ſhould I aſſume the pride of rank? Leave me in my obſcurity, if that can be a ſafeguard to the perſon whom I love above all the world. I ſhould be in no leſs danger, replied ſhe, were I to conſent to your requeſt. It is known that I am not married; you cannot, therefore, paſs for my daughter: that would diſgrace both you and me. The world does not always view things in their true light: ſeeing you poſſeſs an ample fortune, which I have taken care to ſecure you, it would inquire how you came by it; you are handſome, and it would generally form the moſt diſhonourable ideas of you: the daughter of Achmet was not born to be affronted with the title of an *adventureſs*. I know the haughtineſs of your ſoul; ſuch a ſuſpicion would make you die with vexation. Your true title explains all:

all: it intereſts every one in your welfare, and procures you their reſpect. One day you will better feel the value of that reſpect to a woman, than you do at preſent. My reſolution, therefore, is formed; ſo let it reſt.

The ſame day I received the compliments of all the community; and this eaſed the nuns of a burden which had preſſed heavily on them theſe three years; for, thanks to the prohibition they were under, every one burnt to reveal the ſecret to me.

We ſoon after left the convent of Benedictines. Emilia carried me to my godfather and my godmother, both of whom approved her intention of declaring who I was. The report ſoon ſpread. The doge, the ſenate, all

the different orders of the republic came to visit me. I was young: these ceremonies were tiresome to me; and I felt, for the first time, the weight of grandeur.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

ARRIVAL AT ROME.
AUDIENCE OF THE POPE.

EMILIA having put her affairs in order, and turned into money the little fortune left her by her father, we ſoon after quitted Genoa, and went to Rome. My conductreſs was not diſpleaſed to exhibit the acquiſition ſhe had made to the Chriſtian religion at the ſeat of its ſupreme head. It was a

kind of triumph; and who would not excuſe the vanity ariſing from ſo pure a principle?

My arrival at Rome excited an emotion of pride, which, I own, I could not reſtrain. This then, ſaid I, is that proud city which gave birth to the haughty lords of the world! this is the land which was overrun by the anceſtors of that Conſtantine, who founded the city where mine now reign! your glory, proud Romans, ſunk under the aſcendancy of my race, now ſeated on that throne, which a nation, that had wielded the ſword of victory for a thouſand years, could not defend from its conquering arm.

Emilia, accuſtomed to read what paſſed in my mind, gueſſed my ſentiments. Do not, ſaid ſhe, aſcribe to your anceſtors the honour of what was owing

owing to the vices and effeminacy of Conſtantine's ſucceſſors. When your anceſtors ſeated themſelves on the ruins of the throne of the Cæſars, they did not avenge the world, they only added a new link to the chain of oppreſſion: they wove the veil of ignorance with a woof of iron: not contented with making it impenetrable to truth, they endeavoured to make its weight ſo great, that no human hand could lift it up. Believe me, my dear Cecilia, when the ſoul looks inwards upon herſelf, contemplates her majeſty, and views the point of communication between man and the deity, ſhe prides herſelf but little in animating a body, through whoſe veins flow the blood of a Bajazet, a Solyman, or a Mahomet. I perceive, replied I, that you do not eſtimate glory very highly. I eſtimate virtue, ſaid ſhe, above all things. All glory, that has not reſpect for the Supreme Being for

its baſe, and the love of mankind for its object, is at leaſt an error of the imagination, if it be not a crime of the ſenſes.

The news of my arrival ſoon ſpread abroad, and every eye in Rome was fixed on me. When I went out I was followed by crowds: I furniſhed a ſubject of converſation for every circle: I was the admiration of one ſex, and the envy of the other.

Emilia ſolicited for me an audience of the ſovereign pontiff, which ſhe eaſily obtained. Clement XI. then filled the chair of St. Peter. Full of years and virtues, he had the venerable air of the antient patriarchs. He was tall, and not yet bent beneath the weight of age. Contemplation had furrowed his lofty forehead. The ſerenity of his mind was painted in his eyes,

eyes, the vivacity of which was taken off by age and meditation. Long abſtinence had removed the colour from his cheeks: abſtinence, that the leanneſs of his body ſhowed he had the courage to ſupport. His reverend age well repreſented the majeſty of that God, whoſe miniſter he was, by the reſpect which it inſpired; whilſt his body, worn with faſting, preached his law more forcibly than all the powers of human eloquence.

The circumſtance was ſufficiently extraordinary to induce him to give a degree of pomp to this audience. All the cardinals, prelates, foreign miniſters, and great officers of the court, were preſent. The pope received me in a hall of the vatican magnificently decorated. He was ſeated on a throne of red velvet, embroidered with gold, and enriched with jewels. His holineſs was

clad in his pontifical habiliments. The timidity natural at my age, and the awful appearance of a ſpectacle ſo new, made me caſt down my eyes, on entering into the hall, where I was expected. Emilia followed me. When I approached the ſteps of the throne, the pope aroſe to receive me; his movement obliged me to liſt up my eyes to look at him. The impreſſion made on me by the old man of Genoa ſhould be recollected. I could not reſtrain an emotion of terror at the ſight of the pontiff. I gave a ſhriek, and fell down in a ſwoon. Emilia, who had foreſeen, and feared this circumſtance, ſupported me in her arms: every aſſiſtance was eagerly given me, and the accident was attributed to my extreme youth, intimidated by the awful appearance of the ceremony. I ſoon recovered; and reaſon getting the better of my repugnance, I exerted myſelf to ſupport the

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ſight of his holineſs, who paid me a compliment moſt flattering, and, at the ſame time, moſt ſuitable to the majeſty of the place he held. I anſwered him with a noble modeſty: but when I was informed, that it was time to approach him to kiſs his feet, I confeſs all the pride of my blood was arouſed; nor could I bring myſelf to conſent to it. You cannot require, ſaid I, addreſſing myſelf to his holineſs, the daughter of ſo many emperors to proſtrate herſelf before you: that homage is only due from me to the God whom you ſerve as well as I, and whom I have the happineſs to know. I revere you as his miniſter, but him only I adore. You are not in his temple; I ſee only the brilliancy of your court; and there is not a court on earth where I do not conſider myſelf as the equal of its ſovereign.

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The pope was ſilent for a few minutes. Without ſhowing the leaſt alteration in his countenance, he anſwered me in the following terms. Preſerve thoſe ſentiments of God, which do you honour. The etiquette of courts is the work of man. To exact ſubmiſſion to it, or to refuſe it, both, perhaps, ſpring from the ſame principle of pride. The reſpect due to God is a right which the ſceptre confers on ſovereigns, and which they ought to maintain: but ceremonies are ſo nearly related to worldly vanity, that a neglect of them may be eaſily pardoned.

The audience finiſhed; and the pope cauſed a magnificent entertainment to be given me, at the palace of *Monte Cavallo*. His nieces did the honours of the feaſt, at which we were ſerved by the officers of his holineſs. In the afternoon all the ladies of Rome repair-

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ed to the palace, and were ſucceſſively preſented to me. In the evening we went, in the carriages belonging to the court, to the great church of St. Peter's, where the ſovereign pontiff officiated, and gave us his benediction.

On leaving the church, the firſt and moſt ſuperb in the Chriſtian world, we found that an artificial day had taken the place of night. That immenſe temple, which is illuminated in an inſtant, by means of oil of ſpike, was covered with an innumerable quantity of lamps, from its baſe to the ſummit of its dome, which is of a prodigious height. This forms a moſt beautiful ſpectacle, of which it is difficult to conceive an idea. It is an immenſe pile of light, that, aſcending majeſtically under the cope of heaven, whitens the cloud ſlowly gliding over it. It is the palace of the God of the univerſe, covered with all the

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ſplendour that human littleneſs can beſtow. It is the image of that pillar of fire, involved in which the God of Iſrael once led his choſen people.

It is eaſy to be ſuppoſed, that my appearance at Rome made ſome noiſe. All the ambaſſadors informed their courts; and it was ſoon ſpread throughout Europe, that a daughter of Achmet III. had embraced the Chriſtian religion, and that ſhe had been received and acknowledged as ſuch by the pope. This circumſtance ſtopped the mouths of thoſe who, ſworn enemies to every thing ſavouring of the marvellous, would have endeavoured to call in queſtion the truth of my birth.

Every one, fond of following the example of the court, was eager to make entertainments for me. The foreign miniſters

miniſters were not the laſt. The Malteſe ambaſſador, as repreſentative of an order profeſſedly the protector of religion, inſiſted on my becoming his gueſt; and, in the name of the grand maſter, and all the knights, aſſured me of a protector againſt every attempt of a power, whoſe attacks they had ſo often repulſed.

I accepted his offers, and he cauſed a magnificent apartment to be fitted up for my reception in his palace. This condecenſion put an end to the tranquillity of my life. Here was I to loſe my indifference: here was I to feel, for the firſt time, that ſentiment which, though often the ſource of ſupreme felicity, too often embitters all our days.

In this houſe I ſaw the Chevalier de * * *. He was twenty years old. To a charming

a charming figure, and an illuſtrious birth, he added an enchanting diſpoſition, a warm heart, and a ſoul of ſenſibility. Such he appeared to me, and ſuch he ever was. What is that irreſiſtible power, which draws two hearts towards one another? Are we not born with thoſe ſeeds of ſympathy, which need but a caſual meeting to make them bud? Does our organization conceal a fluid, which, ſubject to the powers of attraction, unites more readily with one object than with another; and is this emanation reciprocal? I am much inclined to believe ſuch an hypotheſis: probably at no diſtant period its truth may be evident.

Be it as it may, I loved the Chevalier de * * * the moment I ſaw him, nor did I make a leſs impreſſion upon his heart. The youngeſt ſon of a noble houſe, he was going to Malta to take his

his vows, and ſeek, amongſt ſtrangers, a fortune ſuitable to his birth, which the laws of men, contrary to thoſe of nature, refuſed him from his own family.

A noble frankneſs, which I always admired amongſt the many other virtues with which his ſoul was adorned, made him ſoon break ſilence. I had known him but a few days. One evening he thus accoſted me. To ſee and to love you are the ſame thing. My boldneſs may, perhaps, diſpleaſe you, as I am not inſenſible of the difference birth has placed between us. But I am by nature open: I love you, and I dare avow it. Can it be a crime, when I pretend to nothing? If you be not offended with this confeſſion, 'tis all I aſk: I know the reſpect due to you too well to hope. If I have offended you I ſhall die with grief; if you pity me, I

ſhall

ſhall die content: and if I had room to believe that I ſhould not have been indifferent to you had I been your equal, I ſhould be the happieſt of lovers.

My heart was prejudiced in his favour; what could I anſwer? A tear fell from my eye in ſpite of me. This confeſſion, ſaid I to him, I have feared, as I expected it. But I am not leſs open than you. I cannot conceal that I love you; the ſentiment is pleaſing to my heart; but I perceive that it will be the torment of my life, as I feel that no one but you is capable of inſpiring it. What chains does my duty lay on me, which I never will break, that I may preſerve a heart worthy you! What obſtacles are to be expected from a powerful family, which I ſhall never aſſiſt you to overcome, becauſe they would hurt my pride; and you owe more to your parents than to me! It would be more

more prudent to reject your advances, and to conceal my ſentiments: but I cannot ſtoop to diſguiſe. I perceive all our dangers: I ſee the torment we prepare for ourſelves: but I am not deceitful, and I lay open to you a heart of which you are the maſter, but in which virtue will always walk by the ſide of the ſentiments you inſpire.

I then exhorted him to purſue the wiſhes of his family, to repair to Malta and take his vows. A thouſand prejudices againſt me, continued I, may ariſe in the minds of your family. Would you expoſe me to the affront of being diſdained by thoſe, who, illuſtrious as they may be, will ever be my inferiors? Had I a throne I would ſhare it with you; with you I would bear adverſity without one complaint: but I confeſs, my love could not ſupport contempt; nor can I deny, that I would

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even rather forego for ever the hope of ſeeing you again, than——Ah! do not, ſaid he interrupting me, kill me with the picture of anticipated misfortunes, to which, perhaps, we ſhall never be expoſed. Let me, at leaſt, uſe every effort to prevent them; and if what you ſeem to fear ſhould prove true, I ſwear to you by my honour, which I hold moſt ſacred, that, jealous of yours, I will inform you of it with my preſent frankneſs; and will be the firſt to adviſe you to avoid a man, whoſe family is inſenſible of the reſpect due to you.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

MEETING OF EMILIA WITH SALMONI. HIS ADVENTURES

AFTER this converſation ſix weeks paſſed ſmoothly on. Every day increaſed my eſteem for the young chevalier: every inſtant I diſcovered the noble qualities of his heart, and was intoxicated, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, with the pleaſure of loving him. But the intereſts of friendſhip

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ſoon came to participate with thoſe of love: for I was too much concerned in the following event not to ſhare in the joy of Emilia.

One morning ſhe and I took a walk together, as, it being the beginning of ſpring, the mornings were extremely pleaſant, and we were willing to enjoy them. In the courſe of our walk we paſſed before the church of St. Mary the Great. I propoſed to hear maſs. We entered. Setting my foot on the threſhold, I made a falſe ſtep, and ſtumbled. A cavalier, of a good appearance, and richly dreſſed, being near me, offered me his arm, and led me to the neareſt ſeat. Emilia's attention was wholly beſtowed on me. When I was ſeated, and the cavalier had aſſured himſelf, that I had received no hurt, he made a bow, and was retiring. The ſound of his voice caught the ear of Emilia;

Emilia; lifting up her eyes——Heavens! cried ſhe, it is he; and inſtantly fell down at his feet.

This accident called all our attention to her. The women in Italy always go out in a thick veil: I removed Emilia's to give her air. No ſooner did the cavalier perceive her face, than he exclaimed,—What do I ſee! It is Fatima. —Monſter!—I ſaw he was about to run from her. If it be true, that you have to complain of this woman, ſaid I, yet you, at leaſt, owe her that aſſiſtance, which humanity would direct every man to beſtow. Theſe words ſtopped him. By the help of ſome perſons who were by, we conveyed her to a ſurgeon's near the church. Some gold, that I offered at our entrance, procured the ready aſſiſtance of all the houſe. We were ſhewn into a neat chamber, and Emilia was laid on a bed. I was a little

uneaſy at the cauſe of this event, and yet I thought I ſuſpected it. Notwithſtanding all the means uſed, Emilia continued a long while in a ſwoon. In falling ſhe received a ſlight wound on her head; it was dreſſed. As ſhe did not recover, the ſurgeon went out for an elixir, from which he hoped better ſucceſs. The cavalier, Emilia, and I, remained alone in the chamber. The moment the former ſaw himſelf at liberty,—ungrateful woman, ſaid he, may this accident be the ſole puniſhment of thy infidelity: and you, who, from your age, appear to be her daughter, may you never imitate ſo unworthy an example. — Appearances, ſaid I, often deceive us; nor is this the firſt time that innocence has been accuſed by injuſtice.—Heavens! cried he, you excuſe her? you then are as vile as ſhe. —At theſe words my face glowed with indignation.—Raſh man, ſaid I, forget

not

not the reſpect due to my ſex: forget not, in addreſſing me, the reſpect due to the daughter of Achmet.

The laſt words ſtruck him as with a clap of thunder. He was petrified. Is it poſſible? What! you are not her daughter? It was you whom ſhe took from the ſeraglio, and you are the daughter of the ſultan? Theſe words he uttered with an heſitating voice, and caſting a look on Emilia, in which trouble, doubt, love, and repentance, were painted by turns.—Unjuſt man! ſaid I to him, thou canſt not deceive me: thou art Salmoni. Behold the unhappy victim of love to thee, who, for theſe fourteen years, has mourned thy abſence. Finiſh thy work by curſing her, whom joy at ſeeing thee again has killed. —If it be ſo, cried he, I am a monſter. O! deareſt Emilia! live, if it be poſſible, to puniſh the wretch who dared ſuſpect

thee. The ſound of his voice, ſo delightful to her, reached her very ſoul. She, by degrees, recovered, and her eyes, opening to the light, looked around to ſeek her lover.—My dear Salmoni, ſaid ſhe, do I ſee you once more? Then I die content.

At this moment the ſurgeon entered. He made her ſwallow a few drops of a liquor, which he brought; and underſtanding that the accident was occaſioned by a ſudden ſurprize, he thought it proper to open a vein. An extreme feebleneſs was now the only complaint that remained. The ſurgeon declared that ſhe was perfectly out of danger, and that a few hours reſt would perfectly eſtabliſh her health. I had ſent to inform the Malteſe ambaſſador with the accident which had happened to Emilia, without mentioning the cauſe. He came immediately with his coach to fetch

fetch us; and the reſpect he paid me entirely convinced Salmoni of the truth of what I had told him. Taking him by the hand, and addreſſing myſelf to the ambaſſador,—permit me, ſaid I, to preſent to you a gentleman of Genoa. You know, ſir, all my adventures; but I am certain, that he can add circumſtances of which all of us are yet ignorant.—Whatever relates to a princeſs like you, madam, ſaid the ambaſſador, muſt be heard with avidity. He received Salmoni with the greateſt complaiſance; and Emilia being now able to bear the motion of the carriage, we all four got into it.

Salmoni's eyes were drowned in tears. Emilia gave a free courſe to hers, which had hitherto oppreſſed her heart, without being able to find a vent. My careſſes, the ſight of Salmoni, the attention of the ambaſſador, all united to

call them forth: they flowed plentifully; and this, perhaps, ſaved her life, which, ſpite of the ſurgeon's prognoſtic, was not, I believe, quite out of danger.

When we arrived at the palace, we ſhut ourſelves up together. The chevalier de * * * alone was excepted from the orders, which ſhut the gate to every one elſe. The ambaſſador and he were acquainted with every circumſtance that had preceded, followed, or accompanied our departure from the ſeraglio. The long letter which Salmoni had put into the caſket, which he had ſent Emilia by the young icoglan, and which ſhe had preſerved with all the care of a lover, had informed us of every thing that had happened to him during his ten years ſearch, till his arrival at Conſtantinople. He began his narrative, therefore, to which we were all extremely attentive, with

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our flight from the palace of Achmet.

Before I begin, ſaid Salmoni, permit me, my dear Emilia, to aſk you, who that man was, whom I ſaw receive you at the foot of the ſeraglio, and who fell a victim to my jealouſy.—I know no more than you, anſwered Emilia. I took him for you, when I found myſelf in his arms. Judge of my fright, when he was ſtabbed before my face.—Horrible myſtery, ſaid Salmoni, which I cannot yet penetrate, and which has made me ſo unjuſt to the moſt reſpectable of women! but the letter, which I gave to the ſlave, at the gate of the caravanſary, appointing the rendezvous at midnight, how came you to be before the hour? for it was but eleven when you were at the place. —You have reaſon to ſay, my dear Salmoni, that it is an inexplicable my-

ſtery. The ſlave, who received the billet from your hands, could not deceive me: that ſlave was myſelf. I could not reſiſt the deſire of ſeeing you: that of ſpeaking to you I was able to conquer, as the leaſt indiſcretion might have ruined us. It was I who, the next day, received your anſwer. When I re-entered the ſeraglio it was almoſt night: I ran it over by the twilight; I fancied it mentioned midnight. That evening I could not be alone to read it at my leiſure, as a ſlight cold, which Cecilia had caught, obliged me to have two ſlaves with me, to ſit up with her. The next day I had ſeized a moment to peruſe it. As I was opening it, the ſultan was announced, who was coming to ſee his daughter. In my hurry, I had only time to throw it into a large marble vaſe, deſigned to hold perfumes, which ſtood in a corner of my apartment. The ſultan would carry his daughter to the

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ſultana Aſki. I was obliged to follow him, and to paſs the day with her. In the evening, on my return, my firſt care, being alone, was to ſeek the letter. I found it in the vaſe, into which I had thrown it. I then obſerved, that the words eleven o'clock were interlined, and the word below entirely effaced. I did not much attend to that circumſtance, as I thought it might eaſily have eſcaped my notice when I ran it over the evening before. Beſides, how could I have any ſuſpicion? I received it from your own hand; I had concealed it all night in my boſom; in the morning I put it into the vaſe, out of ſight of every eye; and in the evening I found it in the ſame place. Nothing, then, could raiſe the leaſt doubt in my mind: and if I were at the place of rendezvous at eleven o'clock, it was becauſe I was firmly perſuaded that I was punctually obeying your wiſhes.—

I cannot comprehend it, replied Salmoni; and the recital of my hiſtory will convince you that I was more unfortunate than culpable. My impatience brought me early to the ſhore. The French veſſel was anchored within forty yards of it. The captain had on board the ladder and crook, which he had procured. I had ordered him to land them at half an hour after eleven, as the janiſſaries, who might, perhaps, diſcover us, if they were landed earlier, generally keep a more careleſs watch from that time till day-break. It was ſcarce ten when I was at the place appointed beneath the wall. I concealed myſelf between ſome rocks, which were waſhed by the ſea. In this ſituation nothing could eſcape my obſervation, and I was placed ſo as to be ſecure from diſcovery. I perceived on board the veſſel the ladder and the crook, which, from their length, reached over the ſtern; and I

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ſaw the two tall trees ſo plainly, that I could diſtinguiſh the two ropes of the ſwing. Hence I eaſily conjectured the means you had contrived to effect your eſcape, and the uſe of the crook you had ordered.

A kind of inquietude in ſuch a ſituation cannot be avoided: yet never, perhaps, in my life, did I paſs ſuch happy moments as thoſe. In one hour I was to claſp in my arms the object of all my wiſhes, for whom love had made me undergo ſuch cares and ſuch fatigues. I fancied I already ſaw you: I fancied I already ſpoke to you. Too happy dream! how dreadfully was I to be awaked from it!

At three quarters after ten a patrole of janiſſaries paſſed by me. I underſtood, from their converſation, that they had ſeized ſome wine in a Turk's

houſe, and, like good muſſulmen, choſe rather to drink it themſelves, than to give others an opportunity of ſinning. Having more than they could well manage, they were carrying a part of their prize to their comrades: hence I judged, with joy, that I ſhould have nothing to fear from their preſence the remainder of the night.

Scarcely were they gone off, when, looking towards that ſide from which the janiſſaries had come, I perceived a man ſtealing along at the foot of the wall, who appeared to be carrying on his ſhoulder ſomething long and heavy. When he was oppoſite the two trees he ſtopped, and ſet his load up againſt the wall, which I perceived was a ladder and a crook, reſembling thoſe which I had been directed to procure.

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The ghoſt of Clytemneſtra ſtruck not ſuch horror into the parricide her ſon. My hair ſtood an end. A cold ſweat trickled from every pore: infernal jealouſy twined all her ſnakes about my heart. What a dreadful ſtate! from the moſt profound ſerenity, my ſoul ruſhed at once to the moſt tumultous rage. A moment before the path of life ſeemed ſtrewed with never fading flowers: in an inſtant a ſea of blood ruſhes to my view, and I burn to plunge into it. No gradual declivity to break the horrid precipice: whilſt I am wandering in the enchanted gardens of Armida, the frightful Styx riſes at my feet.

With a motion quick as lightning, I ſtarted up, drew my poniard, and was ruſhing on the traitor, when a reflection ſtopped me. Heaven's, cried I, I love, and love to diſtraction; yet, perhaps, am about

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to make wretched two hearts, that, like mine, live only to love! may not the ſame idea occur to two perſons? This poor man, perhaps, expects his miſtreſs; and ſhall I be barbarian enough—— Before I could finiſh I perceived the ſwing in motion. The eye of a lover is not eaſily deceived: I knew you in an inſtant; I ſaw you deſcend the ladder; I ſaw you embrace him, and your death was reſolved. You tremble at my tale. Pardon my paſſion; you know the power of jealouſy. To my diſorder, to the ſudden fright with which the cries of that infant ſtruck my bewildered mind, are you indebted for that life, which my madneſs had already doomed to deſtruction.

My deteſted rival falling beneath my ſtroke, I fled without knowing what I did. My ſtrength exhauſted by rage and grief, I felt at a ſmall diſtance. I

ſaw

ſaw the ſailors carry you off; and, will you believe it, I felt a kind of pleaſure at ſeeing you out of danger? The workings of the human heart are ſurely not to be underſtood. Yet it was but a tranſient gleam. The recollection of your offence, the unexpected ſight of that infant, which painted it to me in the blackeſt colours, and, above all, your horrible diſſimulation, which had given me hopes, whilſt another——O Emilia! what a moment for the unfortunate Salmoni! yes, his guilty mouth dared imprecate on your head, ſtorm, thunder, tempeſt: I called all the horrors of ſhipwreck to aid my vengeance. I prayed to ſee it, to be the witneſs of it, and to die with pleaſure in beholding that lovely face daſhed to pieces againſt the rocks.

This new fit of rage recalling my ſtrength, I aroſe. Contempt ſucceeding,

ing, I felt a momentary calm: I fancied I had baniſhed you for ever from my thoughts: I walked off perfectly tranquil. Dreadful tranquillity! it reſembled the ſilence of the grave. It was a new torment. I ſaw myſelf alone in the univerſe. The world ſeemed to have ſlidden from beneath my feet, to have taken my ſoul with it, and to have left only a ſelf-moving machine, utterly inſenſible both to pain and pleaſure. Death offered itſelf to my view as an univerſal comforter, whoſe favours would compenſate thoſe that love had refuſed. I flew to its embrace—But more powerful religion, holding up the mirror of truth, expoſed to my ſight all the deformities of my fancied benefactor. Divine religion! man may endeavour to avoid thee, but, in the hour of adverſity, thou will be always nigh him: the unhappy victim of his paſſions is, perhaps, the peculiar object of thy love.

The

The captain had brought me acquainted with a French prieſt, who was his confeſſor. At the end of four or five days I repaired to his houſe, and unfolded to him my ſorrows. I did not leave him for ſome weeks. He did not heal my griefs, but he taught me to bear them.

The flight of Fatima was talked of all over Conſtantinople, every one relating it in a different manner. It is well known how difficult the news of the ſeraglio gets abroad. Some ſaid, that Fatima had fled with a child which ſhe had by a Chriſtian, who had found means to be introduced to her in woman's clothes. Others affirmed, that ſhe eſcaped alone, but with immenſe treaſures. Theſe aſſerted, that the report was merely political, to conceal an intrigue between a ſultana and the boſtangi bachi, who had been ſtrangled.

Thoſe,

Thoſe, better informed, no doubt, whiſpered, that the princeſs, daughter of the ſultana Aſki, had been carried off by Fatima, to be educated in the Chriſtian religion. Amongſt ſo many reports, how was it poſſible to diſcover the truth? I could ſee nothing but a faithleſs miſtreſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

CURIOUS RELATION OF SALMONI'S TRAVELS.

A Few weeks after this fatal event, I prepared to leave Conſtantinople. I intended to quit a place which was become inſupportable to me, to baniſh myſelf for ever from my native country, in which I had become acquainted with the faithleſs woman who had rendered life a burden to me, and to

to retire to India. I was in poſſeſſion of about two thouſand ſequins. Theſe I intended to employ in trade, and, by a new way of life, and the ſight of new objects, efface, if poſſible, the painful remembrance of all my misfortunes. In conſequence of this reſolution, I waited for a caravan, which was about to depart for Egypt, by means of which I purpoſed to reach mount Tauris, and thus get into the mogul's country through Perſia.

The caravan was now to depart in two days, and I had every thing ready. I had retired to reſt pretty early, after having ſupped; and my exhauſted mind feeling a kind of calm, ſleep, to which I had long been a ſtranger, had forcibly ſeized me. In the middle of the night, feeling myſelf roughly ſhaken, I opened my eyes, and ſaw, by the light of ſome tapers, a crowd of janiſſaries, with ſabres

ſabres in their hands, ſurrounding my bed, and my two ſlaves, who ſlept in my chamber, weltering in their blood. A profound ſilence reigned throughout this ſcene of horror. I was dragged out of bed. Offering to ſpeak a few words, the fetfa of the ſultan was diſplayed. On ſuch an occaſion, to pay reverence to it, and be ſilent, is the cuſtom. As I paſſed for a muſſulman, my danger would have been increaſed, if I had diſcovered myſelf to be a Chriſtian. I ſupported the character I had aſſumed, therefore, to the laſt: I bowed my head, and awaited death.

But to take my life was not their object. Four mutes bound my hands, blindfolded me, and carried me off almoſt naked. When, from the diſtance, I imagined myſelf in the ſtreet, I was placed in a litter, and we ſat off. I cannot ſay how long we were on the road:

road: all I know is, that, after a certain time, which appeared long in my ſituation, the litter ſtopped, and I was conveyed down into a dungeon. The bandage was then removed from my eyes: the light of torches diſcloſed to my view the damp walls, a little ſtraw for my bed, a veſſel of water, and a ſmall portion of black bread. My conductors immediately departed. I heard an infinite number of gates ſhut upon me; and I judged that the dungeon was deep, as the ſound they made ſeemed higher and higher above my head.

I racked my imagination to conceive the cauſe of ſuch rigorous treatment; but I could attribute it to no other than the eſcape of Fatima. Yet how could I be ſuſpected of being concerned in it? No one was witneſs to her flight. I was certain that the French captain had not betrayed me. I had killed my

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed rival; he, therefore, could not diſcloſe it. I was loſt in conjectures. At laſt, my mind filled with the religious ſentiments it had imbibed, I gave myſelf up entirely into the hands of God; and my heart confeſſed his juſtice in puniſhing me, at leaſt in ſome degree, for the, perhaps, innocent blood I had ſhed.

In this horrid abode I remained about three months. Bread and water were brought me every two days. At laſt I was taken out in the ſame manner as I was brought thither. I imagined that I was conveying to the place of execution, and I prepared to die. I was placed in a litter, and, after a time, my guides made me alight. I walked on foot a few minutes: my eyes were uncovered: the light of day was too ſtrong for them: I grew faint; and it was only by the help of ſome cordials that I recovered

covered my ſtrength, exhauſted by grief and confinement.

I then perceived myſelf in a ſuperb apartment. My guards had withdrawn. Where am I? ſaid I to myſelf. Is this enchantment? But now I was buried in the bowels of the earth, and now I am in the abode of the gods. Where will this terminate? Scarcely had I paſſed a quarter of an hour in this ſituation, when a numerous guard of janiſſaries entered, and ſoon after a man in the flower of his age, of a majeſtic figure. Judge of my aſtoniſhment, when, in this man, I beheld the ſultan. I had ſeen him often enough in the ſtreets of Conſtantinople not to be miſtaken. I then ſuppoſed my laſt hour inevitably arrived, and that Achmet had cauſed me to be brought before him to enjoy the ſight of my puniſhment. Were it a fortunate preſage, or that the ſoul

ſoul collects all its forces on critical moments, I betrayed no ſigns of fear: I thought only of putting off my death, or even eſcaping it, if poſſible. The ladder and crook, that had aſſiſted your flight, were now brought in. The ſultan, addreſſing me himſelf, aſked if I knew them. I anſwered, no. This I could with truth, as I perceived they were not the ſame which the French captain had procured by my direction. The poor icoglan, to whom I had formerly given the diamonds, then made his appearance. He was laden with chains; and that ſight afflicted me. I am the cauſe of that innocent creature's misfortunes, ſaid I to myſelf; my fooliſh paſſion has brought calamity on his head. The ſultan, with a ſevere tone, aſked if he knew me. The child, worn out by long ſufferings, pale, trembling, anſwered, with a faint voice, that he had never before ſeen me. The ſtate

I was in, a long thick beard, hollow eyes, ſallow complexion, and my body ſcarcely covered with a few rags, might contribute to deceive him; nor was I ſurprized that he did not recollect me. The ſultan made him withdraw, and having diſmiſſed his guards, I remained alone with him.

Draw near, Chriſtian, ſaid he; I would not be overheard. I a Chriſtian! cried I.—Yes, thou art: but fear nothing; the ſecret is known only to myſelf. Were it diſcovered, I ſhould be obliged to ſacrifice thee to the prejudices of my ſubjects: but I alone am acquainted with it; and Achmet is not ſo narrow-minded as to deſtroy a man, becauſe in his infancy he imbibed impreſſions different from his own. I know that thou wouldſt have taken away Fatima. Thou lovedſt her, no doubt, and love makes thee excuſable.

Thy

Thy conduct, and the vengeance thou haſt taken of thy rival, convince me that thou waſt not her accomplice in the injury ſhe did me: thou mayſt thank heaven for it, as it has ſaved thee from my vengeance. The tone of generoſity, and the majeſtic dignity, that diſplayed themſelves in the prince's manner, induced me to ſpeak the truth. Yes, ſaid I, I will not deceive the noble Achmet; I loved. I thought I had found a miſtreſs by whom that love was returned, and I found a traitreſs, that has poiſoned all my happineſs. Doſt thou know, ſaid the ſultan, the infant which ſhe took with her?—It was hers, no doubt: the inconteſtible witneſs of her treachery. That heightened my rage, as it was indiſputably the father of that infant, whom the perjured Fatima accompanied, when my poniard reached his heart.—Thy opinion confirms to me, that thou art not guilty.

Quit this country. Every one believes thee to be a muſſulman; I alone know the contrary. I will not betray thee; but the ſecret may tranſpire; thou wouldſt then be loſt, as policy would not permit me to ſave thee. Fly, therefore: my favour ſhall follow thee. Poor wretch! continued the prince, in a tone of pity, I have made thee ſuffer much; but if thou wert acquainted with the reaſon, I am ſure thou wouldſt pardon me. Set a price on thy ſufferings. What can I do to make thee amends for them? Whatever be thy demand, it ſhall not take from the bounty I deſign thee.—My eyes filled with tears, and my heart big with grief, I fell at his knees. O, great prince! ſaid I, this moment has effaced all. But ſince you command me to aſk a favour, I deſire nothing for myſelf, grant only to my requeſt the life of that unfortunate child, the young

icoglan.

icoglan. Generous young man! replied Achmet, the requeſt is worthy thee; the favour is worthy me: thou ſhalt have thy wiſh. A prince who makes the innocent ſuffer, is unworthy the throne, if he do not repair the injury. Immediately calling in his guards, and ordering the grand vizier to attend,—let this Turk be honoured, ſaid he, pointing to me; let him be loaded with my gifts; let my protection follow him every where; and whenever he ſhall chooſe to depart from this country, let my treaſures be open to him.—Then ſending for the young icoglan,—I give thee, ſaid the prince, a father, a maſter, a friend: to him I give up all my power over thee. And mayſt thou, turning to me, frequently recollect, that he is a preſent from Achmet. A day may come, when thou ſhalt ſee the object of all thy ſorrow; thou wilt be more happy than I.—At theſe words he withdrew, and the guards followed.

I was ſtrongly affected by his bounty, and the aſtoniſhing end of an adventure, the beginning of which had appeared ſo terrible. But I was loſt in conjecture. How did he know that I was a Chriſtian? How could he be the only one that knew it? What did he mean by ſaying, that if I again ſaw Fatima, I ſhould be more happy than he? This, madam, ſaid Salmoni, addreſſing himſelf to me, is explained by the knowledge I have of your illuſtrious birth; but all the reſt is ſtill no leſs a myſtery.

The careſſes of the young icoglan drew me from the profound revery into which I was plunged; the pleaſing ſentiments of friendſhip effaced for a moment the remembrance of all my misfortunes, and I caught him in my arms. His life, which I had ſaved; his ſufferings, of which I had been the involuntary

tary cauſe; the innocent charms of youth, which rendered thoſe ſufferings ſtill more intereſting, all united to twine him round my heart with indiſſoluble bands; and, for fifteen years, he has been the only ſolace of my life.—

During this narrative I could not refrain from tears. I was ſenſible of the torments my abſence muſt have given my father. Whatever had once been in his houſe was dear to me. Where is the young icoglan, ſaid I? I wiſh to ſee him.

I ſhall have the honour to preſent him to you, madam, replied Salmoni. He is in this city; and of all the gifts I have received from your auguſt father, he is the moſt valuable to me. But permit me to finiſh, in a few words, the relation of my adventures, which would, no doubt, appear tedious to

you, madam, were it not for the concern you yourſelf had in them.

The aga of the janiſſaries came to fetch us from the hall in which we were. He conducted us to a neighbouring houſe; and I then learnt from him, that it was one of the apartments of the divan which we had juſt quitted. He refuſed to ſatisfy my curioſity in nothing but the place of my impriſonment. I paſſed ſome days in this houſe to reſt myſelf: in it I found all my effects. After having been loaded with preſents, of rich ſtuffs, jewels, horſes, &c. and receiving from the aga a ſum ſufficient to enſure me a competent fortune for my life, I quitted Conſtantinople, which the remembrance of my dear Fatima rendered inſupportable to me.

Accompanied

Accompanied by the young icoglan, I traverſed a great part of Turkey. It was at that period when the celebrated, but unfortunate, Charles XII. of Sweden, was exhibiting, in an obſcure corner of the world, all the genius of a great man, all the pride of a victorious general, and all the weakneſs of a conqueror, who is left alone in the midſt of his ſchemes. I ſaw this prince at Bender. As an extraordinary man, he ſtruck me with admiration; as a man miſled by ambition, he inſpired me with pity. The ſight of him naturally made me deſirous of ſeeing his vanquiſher.

After a long and diſagreeable journey, I arrived at Moſcow. There I ſaw the famous Peter the Great, the legiſlator of the north, the founder of Ruſſia. I was ſtruck, at firſt ſight, with a good figure, tall ſtature, dignity of counte-

nance, features agreeable, when enlivened by gaiety, fierce when his mind was diſturbed. Having no reaſon to conceal my adventures, the report ſoon ſpread: it came to the ears of the czar. He wiſhed to ſee me. It was eaſy to perceive, that the knowledge I had of Conſtantinople alone intereſted him. I anſwered ingenuouſly. He inquired into the character of Achmet. I related to him the converſation I had with that prince: it undoubtedly painted him ſtrongly.—Did he act thus? ſaid Peter. He did well: I ſhould have done the ſame. I am ſatisfied: he merits the name of great. Is he always attended by his janiſſaries?—Yes, replied I.—He is wrong, ſaid the czar. This great prince, after having received all the information I could give, on the queſtions he aſked, diſmiſſed me with that affability, which not only gained the hearts of the ſubjects of his exten-

ſive

ſive empire, but made him admired during his travels through Europe.

My curioſity being gratified, I quitted Moſcow, and traverſing Germany, I arrived in Holland. After a few days repoſe, I embarked for England, where I reſided ſeveral years. Amongſt the few events which have happened to me, there is but one perhaps that deſerves notice. On finding you, I perceive that it may not be indifferent to you. After I had been five or ſix years in London, being at a coffee houſe in Covent Garden, with ſome Engliſhmen of my acquaintance, two women, meeting oppoſite the door of the coffee houſe, ſtopped, and converſed together in Italian. The language caught my attention, and I obſerved them. Whether it were imagination, or actual reſemblance, I fancied I diſcovered in one of the women the features of

my dear Emilia. This diſcovery made me turn pale: I was near fainting. My friends gathered round me: I informed them of the occaſion of the accident; and one of them, without my knowledge, followed her home, and found where ſhe lived. Returning ſoon after, he told openly the name of the ſtreet, and the houſe. As the circumſtance had drawn on me the attention of the whole room, queſtions were aſked, and having no reaſon to conceal my adventures, I briefly related them to all thoſe who ſurrounded me, and finiſhed with ſaying, that, fancying I recollected in that woman her who had cauſed me ſo many ſorrows, her unexpected appearance had occaſioned my ſudden illneſs.

Some time after I left the coffee houſe with my friends, and imagined the adventure would have ended there; for,

for, recollecting myſelf, I was perſuaded that I had been miſtaken. I fancied that, notwithſtanding the agitation I was in, I had obſerved her to be ſomewhat taller than Emilia, and the colour of her hair different. I ſcarcely thought any more of the circumſtance, when, the next day, Atkins, who had followed her home, called on me, and propoſed to take me to her houſe.—Aſſure yourſelf of the truth, ſaid he; uncertainty is diſagreeable. If you were deceived, your mind will be at eaſe; if it were really Emilia, you will obtain an explanation, and will at leaſt know, whether you have juſt reaſons for your hate.—I yielded to his perſuaſions, and accompanied him. He led me to the houſe, which he had well noticed. On our entrance, we found every thing in the moſt alarming confuſion. We at laſt ſaw the miſtreſs of the houſe. We aſked permiſſion to ſee a lady who lodged there,

there, whom we preſumed to be an Italian.---Alas! ſirs, ſaid the lady, a dreadful accident has happened laſt night to the perſon for whom you inquire. On entering her chamber this morning, ſhe was found weltering in her blood. What ſeems moſt ſtrange is, that her head has been ſeperated from her body, and is not to be found. The doors of the houſe were ſecurely faſtened, nor can we imagine how the aſſaſſins entered: we only conjecture, that they got out of the window, which was found open, and ſome marks of blood on the lamp-iron confirm this ſuppoſition. I am inconſolable for her loſs, continued the lady: I brought her from Italy to England an infant, and ſhe has never been abſent from me ſince. I loved her as if ſhe were my own child. How ſhall I inform her family, who had intruſted her to my care, with this ſad diſaſter? What a

dreadful

dreadful event! how miſerable has it made me!

It was eaſy to diſcover from this diſcourſe, that the Italian was not Emilia; but nevertheleſs, this adventure did not fail to give me ſome diſquiet. I feared that the hiſtory I had related the evening before, in a public coffee-room, would bring ſuſpicion upon me. After ſome little conſultation with my friend, we went to the lord chief juſtice. I imparted to him my apprehenſions; informed him of every thing that had happened to me ſince the former evening; named all the friends with whom I had been in company from that time; ſent for my landlord, who depoſed, that I had not ſtirred out of his houſe, from that time till I went out with Atkins; and Atkins aſſerted, that I had not quitted him ſince he went to my lodgings till the preſent inſtant. The

lord

lord chief juſtice approved my prudence in calling on him; and Atkins, who was a man of fortune; and my landlord, who was a capital ſilk mercer in Ludgate-ſtreet, offering to give bail for my appearance, if it ſhould be thought neceſſary, their offer was accepted; nor have I heard any thing more of this affair.

Now that I am further informed, I perceive the reaſons which the ſultan had for taking vengeance on Emilia, and I doubt not but that a price was ſet upon her head, and that my indiſcretion coſt the life of that unfortunate Italian, whoſe reſemblance to her ſtruck me ſo forcibly. In this fatal event, however, I diſcover the ſecurity of my dear Emilia: the ſultan would, no doubt, be deceived by the ſight of that head, and that illuſion places her life in ſafety.

At length I quitted London. I ſpent ſome time at Paris; and the deſire of reviſiting my native country, from which I had ſo long been abſent, operating ſtrongly on me, I repaired to Antibes, and embarked for Genoa. A ſtrong gale of wind from the north-weſt, ſent no doubt by that Providence who intended at laſt to crown all my misfortunes with the height of felicity, drove us beyond our deſtined port, and we put into Civita Vecchia for ſhelter. Sick of the ſea, I came to Rome, with intent to return home by land. We arrived the day before yeſterday. This morning I went out merely to take a walk: fate led me to the church of St. Mary the Great: there happineſs awaited me, whilſt, by my unjuſt ſuſpicions, I deſerved to have forfeited it for ever.

Emilia

Emilia held out her hand to Salmoni; he ſeized it with the utmoſt eagerneſs. It was impoſſible to refrain from tears, at the ſight of their joy; and the reunion of thoſe unfortunate lovers affected me, perhaps, more ſtrongly, than any other ſcene that ever occurred to me during my life. It is true, I then loved for the firſt time: that I forcibly felt the firſt impreſſions of that ſole paſſion, which has been the charm and the torment of my life: a paſſion that, though fruitleſs, the death of its object was unable to eradicate.

The chevalier de * * * whiſpered me,—O, my princeſs! if Providence decree us a moment like this!—at leaſt, replied I, if it prepare for us the ſame misfortunes, I feel my courage capable of ſupporting them.

Emilia

Emilia could not refuſe Salmoni the relation of all that had happened to her, ſince ſhe left the ſeraglio. From the knowledge of their reciprocal adventures, it was impoſſible to gueſs who it was that received Emilia at the foot of the wall, and how the ſultan knew that Salmoni was a Chriſtian, and concerned in it. The adventure of the Italian, and her tragic end, did not fail to give us ſome diſquiet; and I could eaſily perceive that Emilia was not perfectly tranquil, notwithſtanding the ſecurity which Salmoni ſeemed to diſcover in it. To be leſs expoſed to danger, we agreed to live more retired during our ſtay at Rome; the houſe of the ambaſſador being a ſacred aſylum, which no one would dare to violate. The ambaſſador had the goodneſs to inſiſt on Salmoni's reſiding in his palace; and we ſoon after ſaw the young icoglan, whom he preſented both to me and the ambaſſador,

ambaſſador, arrive with his equipage. Salmoni had made of him a friend; and generouſly uſing the authority, which the ſultan, my father, had given him, had employed it only to beſtow on him his liberty. His long reſidence in England and France, had afforded him an opportunity of giving him a liberal education: he poſſeſſed many agreeable talents: with a charming figure he had the beſt of hearts; and a readineſs of wit made him a moſt pleaſing companion. We all received him into our friendſhip the moment we ſaw him; and I may truly ſay, that he preſerved an inviolable attachment to me till the day of his death. On ſeeing the young icoglan, I could not avoid ſaying to the chevalier,—This, then, is the only one of my father's ſubjects, that remains to the deſcendant of ſo many ſovereigns.—Ah! replied the chevalier, is empire neceſſary

ceſſary to the happineſs of one who poſſeſſes your virtues?—Had I not loved the chevalier before, I believe this anſwer would have decided my heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

MARRIAGE OF SALMONI AND EMILIA.

AFTER ſo many diſappointments, it was natural that Salmoni and Emilia ſhould think of immediately forming an indiſſoluble union. They were now neither of them young: it was rather a long friendſhip they were about to cement, than violent love, which led them to the altar. They did me

me the honour to aſk my conſent, which I gave with tears.—My dear Emilia, ſaid I, you I conſider as my mother, and I ſhould die, if I were to be ſeparated from you; but I would by no means be an obſtacle to your happineſs: I reſtore you to yourſelf; I reſtore you to your lover.—Emilia, melting into tears, fell at my feet.—O my princeſs! ſaid ſhe, nothing but death, or your own commands, ſhall ever ſeparate me from you. Let me, by marrying Salmoni, give you one ſervant more, and thus double the exiſtence of one who will ſerve you to her lateſt hour.

We mingled our tears. I took the hand of Salmoni, and putting it into hers;—O my friends, ſaid I, love me both of you, nor ever quit me. I was born to a throne; but in all the univerſe I poſſeſs only you: you are all the family of an unfortunate princeſs.—Unfortunate!

fortunate! replied Emilia; can you call yourſelf unfortunate, whom I have brought to the knowledge of the true God?—Thus did Emilia appeaſe the emotions of my heart, when ſhe perceived, that the idea of that pomp and grandeur, of which ſhe had deprived me, ſtruck on it too forcibly. This, I confeſs, happened not ſeldom: I was not yet arrived at that age when the emptineſs of human happineſs is diſcovered.

It may be aſked, perhaps;—but if this was the caſe, why did you not return to the arms of your father? Who could prevent you? No one had any right over you: you had innocently left the ſeraglio; therefore you had nothing to fear. Thoſe who can reaſon thus, muſt have a poor idea of the power of religion: that is a chain we cannot eaſily break. I ought, too, to

avow,

avow, that nothing could have induced me to quit the God who was worſhipped by the Chevalier de * * *.

Emilia and Salmoni vowed an eternal attachment to me; and their vow was ſincere, for they both preſerved it inviolable till their death. The ambaſſador would take upon himſelf the care of the wedding. It was performed privately; and the ambaſſador's friends, the knights of Malta, who were preſent at Rome, and the gentlemen in his ſuite, were the only witneſſes of it. But though the feaſt provided by his gallantry was private, it was not the leſs pleaſing, gay, and well-conducted: we amuſed ourſelves much more agreeably than we ſhould have done, had it been public. As it was in the ſpring, it was given at a villa of Cardinal Borgheſe, who lent it for a few days to the ambaſſador. This prelate would be at

the ceremony, and did theſe two lovers the honour to give them the nuptial benediction in his chapel. After it was performed, ſeveral days were ſpent in feſtivity. Icoglan*, who had conſiderable invention and ingenuity, had the direction of all the feaſts. Poſſeſſed of an extraordinary memory, he was perfectly acquainted with all the cuſtoms of the different countries through which he had paſſed with Salmoni. He gave us, in ſucceſſion, a Ruſſian feaſt, an Engliſh tavern entertainment, a French ball, and, on the laſt day, the repreſentation of an amuſement within the walls of a ſeraglio. He had ſo frequently aſſiſted at the latter in his infancy, that he perfectly remembered their ſtyle;

* Though this name, as has already been obſerved, ſignifies a page of the ſultan, as theſe pages are generally children who have been ſtolen from their parents, and of courſe ignorant both of their name and family, this young man retained it as his proper name.

and

and Emilia aſſured us, that ſhe perceived no difference but in the liberty we enjoyed, which added to the pleaſure of it. This period, alas! was ſhort, and I ſoon after experienced the firſt trouble I ever knew.

We had been returned to Rome a few days, and I was yet undetermined on the ſtay we ſhould make there. I had even an inclination to fix in that city: I conſidered it as the only proper aſylum for one who had quitted her country for that religion of which it was the chief ſeat. I enjoyed a fortune, which the prudence of Madame Salmoni had ſecured to me, every way equal to the private ſphere of life to which I was deſtined. She was herſelf in eaſy circumſtances, from the favours which my father had beſtowed on her huſband. We might, therefore, promiſe ourſelves to paſs our days in peace.

One morning the Chevalier de * * * aſked permiſſion to ſee me. He entered. I found him extremely dejected. I, at firſt, thought that he had had a rencounter, and was wounded; but he ſoon undeceived me.—Now, ſaid he, we have need of all our courage: heaven refuſes me the only happineſs I deſire: I am come—to bid you adieu.—I turned pale at this diſcourſe; but ſoon collecting all my fortitude,—explain yourſelf, ſaid I. —Read this letter.—I took the letter. I read it.

" My ſon, my dear ſon, I feel that I am about to pierce thy heart; but forgive thy father; forgive what the pride of his birth, and the care of thy fortune, require of him; the cruel prudence he is compelled to exerciſe, and the ſacrifice he muſt require of thy love: yes, of thy love. I am not unacquainted with it: I am not ignorant how

how much ſhe, who inſpired it, deſerves it by her birth and virtue. But is that enough? Thou waſt born, my ſon, in the lap of greatneſs; but the law, more ſtrong than friendſhip, forces me to leave my eſtates to thy brother, who is no leſs dear to me than thyſelf; and permits me not to give thee a fortune worthy thee, or worthy me. That fortune, then, which the laws refuſe thee, muſt be ſought elſewhere; and the order of Malta is the only one which offers itſelf. What wouldſt thou do, my ſon, wert thou the ſpouſe of a princeſs, whom a circumſcribed fortune would oblige thee to conceal from the world? Was my ſon born to live in obſcurity? Was ſhe herſelf formed for an union with one who cannot place her in a rank ſuitable to her birth? Whilſt her own miſtreſs, all the world will be intereſted in her fate; married, ſhe would be obliged to conform to that of her

huſband. My dear children, for I dare give that appellation to her alſo, perſuade yourſelves, that a father, when he gives a mortal wound to your affection, looks into futurity with a keener eye than you, and that his extreme tenderneſs ſnatches you from a precipice on which you were blindly ruſhing. I know that you will ſhow her my letter. Tell her that, in paying my homage to her, I apppeal to her reaſon; I intreat that reaſon to intercede with my ſon for a father, who ſeeks only his happineſs, to engage him to repair to Malta, to take his vows, and to enter into an order, of which he may hope to be one day ſovereign. What a commiſſion!—I feel its cruelty; but ſhe will alſo feel how much I eſteem her, ſince I dare charge her with it. Adieu, my ſon! I have watered this letter with my tears: but whilſt I write, I feel that my ſon is

ambitious

ambitious of deſerving his father's bleſſing.

Prince de * * *."

When I had finiſhed the letter,—what have you reſolved? ſaid I.---To obey.—In that anſwer I ſee my lover: I ſee the man worthy of the daughter of Achmet. Go: go, and pronounce the dreadful vow, that will tear thee from me for ever; and here receive mine, never to be the wife of any one, ſince I cannot be thine.---Ah! do not render my ſacrifice ſtill more painful, by diſplaying all the beauty of your ſoul. I will obey; but I feel that I ſhall not ſurvive my obedience.---What do you ſay? Your father takes from me a lover, but ſhall he rob me of a friend? That is a ſentiment he ſurely muſt approve. And would you be more cruel than duty, in depriving me, by death, of what friendſhip would permit me to

preſerve? It is your duty to live. Should you ſhow yourſelf unable to bear a misfortune, you would be ſuſpected of cowardice: and would you give the world an opportunity of ſaying that a daughter of Achmet was capable of loving a man unworthy of her affection?

The ambaſſador entered at this moment. We imparted to him all that had paſſed, and the reſolution we had taken. He loved us both tenderly: he approved our courage. He had long ago obſerved what paſſed in our hearts; and I have always conjectured that, being a friend to the chevalier's father, it was he who informed him of our mutual regard. He had alſo received a letter by the ſame courier, to engage him to add the influence of friendſhip to that of duty, in order to prevail on the chevalier.---I expected every thing, chevalier,

ſaid

ſaid he, from your courage, and the noble virtues of the princeſs; but ſince this cruel ſeparation is neceſſary, do not defer it: when we muſt part, the time we ſpend together only adds to our torment. Set off to-morrow; a Malteſe galley attends you at Civita Vecchia. Go; and ſince you muſt renounce all hope of being united, merit, by your courage, and the renown of your actions, thoſe ſentiments of friendſhip with which you are honoured by this auguſt princeſs.

The chevalier's departure was unanimouſly fixed for the next morning. Never did I paſs a more cruel day. The force I put upon myſelf, to ſupport the courage of the chevalier, was an addition to my ſufferings. At length the fatal moment arrived. I granted him leave to write to me. At parting I cut off a lock of my hair,

and putting it into a diamond ring, which I generally wore,—Think ſometimes, ſaid I, on a woman, whoſe unhappineſs, and whoſe boaſt it is to have loved you. He ſeized my hand, which he bathed with his tears. He was forced into the coach. It drove off.

Then, freed from my reſtraint, I gave vent to my grief. My ſituation was indeed cruel. In the bloom of youth I loſt the man who was abſolute maſter of my heart; and I felt in myſelf a proudneſs of ſoul that forbad me ever to love another, and which, whilſt it forced me to admire the conduct of the chevalier's father, could not prevent me from being ſecretly hurt at his preferring the fortune of his ſon, to the honour of an alliance with me. Now that age has matured my reaſon, and calmed my paſſions, I perceive theſe deluſions of pride, and confeſs I judged wrongly

wrongly of the Prince de * * *. But thus does paſſion reaſon; and who doubts the pride of blood to be the moſt unjuſt of all the paſſions?

The day after the chevalier's departure, I wrote to his father in the following terms.

" Prince,

Your ſon is now on his voyage to Malta. To ſay that, is to proclaim him worthy of you; is to convince you that you have done me juſtice. Heaven ordained me to be born the daughter of a ſovereign, but to poſſeſs nothing but my virtues. Had I a throne, I ſhould not have heſitated to place your ſon on it. The qualities of the heart are what determine my choice. I do not, however, refuſe the title of daughter which you give me. It will always give

me pleaſure to be adopted by one of the worthieſt men in Europe.

I am, yours,

Maria Cecilia."

This letter eaſed me a little. I had balanced accounts with my pride, and that left one weight the leſs on my heart. Emilia, Salmoni, and the ambaſſador took every method to direct my attention. Icoglan, who had accompanied the chevalier as far as Civita Vecchia, out of friendſhip, returned the third day. He had ſeen him depart. He did not quit the ſhore till he had entirely loſt ſight of the galley. This amiable young man had conceived ſo ſtrong an attachment to the chevalier, he deſcribed his laſt adieus with ſo much truth, and, at the ſame time, ſuch a delicate attention to my grief, that my friendſhip for him was greatly heightend. He has ſince merited, by very

very conſiderable ſervices, the confidence with which I then honoured him. He gave me a letter from the chevalier, in which was his portrait, which he intreated me to accept. This reſemblance of one ſo dear to me, opened afreſh the wounds of my heart.

I remained ſome months in that ſtate of melancholy which is the uſual effect of great paſſions. I frequently received letters from the chevalier. He informed me that the hour of pronouncing his vows was approaching. I paſſed my days in anſwering him, exhorting him to have courage, and endeavouring to confirm him in the noble ſtep he had taken. I own I wiſhed for that hour with impatience. It ſeemed as if my pains would be ſoftened, and my ſorrow expire, when hope ſhould be no more. How fallacious is this reaſoning of lovers! The ſo much wiſhed

wiſhed for moment at laſt arrived, and then was I a thouſand times more wretched than before. But to go on with events in their proper order, I muſt firſt relate my departure from Rome, which was much nearer at hand than I expected.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

MARIA CECILIA INVITED TO FRANCE. QUITS ROME.

SINCE the chevalier's departure, I had led a very retired life. The ambaſſador, Salmoni, his wife, and Icoglan, were my ſole ſociety. With them I was under no reſtraint. I wept at my eaſe, I talked of my lover; nor were they tired with liſtening to me. One day I had dined alone, the ambaſ-

ſador

ſador having dined with the ambaſſador of France. In the evening I was ſurprized to ſee the latter coming to viſit me, with his gueſt.—Princeſs, ſaid the repreſentative of Malta, the French ambaſſador is come to requeſt the honour of ſupping with you, which I have flattered him you will not refuſe. I am in your houſe, replied I; but ſince you permit me to ſpeak as in my own, it will certainly do me pleaſure. Yes, ſir, addreſſing myſelf to the ambaſſador of France, I ſhall always willingly receive the viſit of a man of your merit, and the miniſter of ſo great a king.

The converſation, at firſt, turned on indifferent ſubjects, till the departure of ſome knights of Malta, who were then at the ambaſſador's; political news; the feaſts that had been celebrated at Verſailles on the majority of Louis XV.

XV. the miniſtry retained at that period by the regent. At length the knights took leave, and we were left alone. The Malteſe ambaſſador opened the converſation.—Notwithſtanding the regret I feel, madam, at loſing the honour of dedicating my ſervices to you, I am not aſtoniſhed that the greateſt princes in Europe are eager to offer you an aſylum in their courts. I ought to have expected that ſo great a princeſs could not long remain unknown, and that I muſt one day yield to others the valuable privilege of ſerving you.—Yes, madam, ſaid the ambaſſador of France, I have to day received a letter from Monſieur, the regent, charging me to requeſt you to repair to Paris, and to offer you, in the name of the king, my maſter, his protection, and his court for your retreat. You will there receive all the honours due to you; and the government will take upon

upon itſelf all the expence of your journey. The requeſt is not leſs honourable than advantageous to you; and Monſieur, the regent, engages me to neglect nothing that can contribute to induce you to yield to his obliging invitation.

Though I am ſenſible, ſir, anſwered I, of all the honour done me by ſuch an offer, it is impoſſible for me to give a deciſive anſwer immediately; I muſt requeſt a day to determine.—The ambaſſador made a low bow, and we paſſed into the ſupper room.

When the miniſter of France was withdrawn, I aſked the ambaſſador's advice.—It is evident, ſaid he, that there is ſome political motive in this ſtep of the French court; but, conſidering the preſent ſituation of affairs in Europe, its view can only be to render itſelf more

more agreeable to the Ottoman Porte. Doubt not but your illuſtrious father is well acqauinted with the leaſt ſtep you take; and the intereſts of his crown not permitting him to employ either force or ſtratagem to recover you, he will be pleaſed with thoſe powers who are eager to afford you protection. His alliance is not indifferent to the balance of Europe; and I will confeſs to you, that had I been of the council of the court of Vienna, I would have exerted my power to induce the emperor to draw you to his court, and, by your preſence, give peace to the empire, which muſt be heartily weary of its long war with the Turks. Who knows whether it be not the deſign of France, whoſe intereſts are at variance with thoſe of the houſe of Auſtria, to prevent this? Whatever it be, were I in your place I ſhould not heſitate. You have nothing to fear. You are going to live

with

with a free, loyal, and generous people, who would frequently rather fail of a political meaſure, than be guilty of a treacherous one. Every unfortunate ſovereign has been ſenſible of this; and the court of France is the only one that can, with juſtice, ſtyle herſelf the ſanctuary of kings. Whilſt I ſpeak thus, do not look on me as the miniſter of a foreign ſtate: I ſpeak as a man who judges of a nation by its virtues, and not from the teſtimony of other nations, whom political motives may induce to ſlander it.

If pleaſures, the charms of ſociety, and eſpecially the reſpect paid to your ſex, are of any weight with you, you will no where meet them in a higher degree. You will reſide in a court, whoſe ſovereign is young, and which, of courſe, muſt abound with pleaſures; whoſe miniſter is famed for his gallantry,

ry, and where beauty is adored. In fine, with a people who, poſſeſſing all the good qualities of every other nation, exceed them in politeneſs. Beſides, what riſque do you run whilſt your father is alive? (Pardon this language of truth and friendſhip). You will always be an object of ſufficient importance in Europe, for all its different powers to have their eyes upon you; nor will they permit that, which ſhall have the honour of poſſeſſing you, to commit the ſlighteſt infringement of the rights of hoſpitality.

Salmoni and his wife, whom the ambaſſador had admitted to this council, were of his opinion; and added, that in France I ſhould be more ſecure againſt the enterprizes of Conſtantinople, than in Italy, from the latter's proximity to Turkey; whilſt its princes, much leſs powerful, were more expoſed to have their

their rights violated with impunity by a ſovereign like Achmet.

Their united advice determined me. I confeſs too, that ſince the departure of the Chevalier de * * *, Rome was become inſupportable to me; and, in ſecret, I was not diſpleaſed at having ſo good a pretext to quit the palace of the Malteſe ambaſſador, without being liable to be taxed with fickleneſs or ingratitude.

The next day I wrote to the ambaſſador of France.

" Sir,

I accept the offer you yeſterday made me in the name of your court. The tenth of next month I have fixed for my departure. You may inform your ſovereign, that I ſhall viſit, with pleaſure, one of the greateſt princes in the world,

world, and a people of whom I have never heard ſpeak but with praiſe. If God do not otherwiſe decree, I will embark at Leghorn, or Genoa, on board an armed veſſel: the reaſons muſt be obvious to you. Two friends, a young man, who is a ſubject of the ſultan, my father, and three domeſtics, will be all my retinue. From the port at which I land, I ſhall travel to Paris by ſhort ſtages: this my health requires.

I am, ſir,

yours,

Maria Cecilia."

The ambaſſador immediately ſent me a letter of congratulation and obedience. He informed me, that he ſhould immediately diſpatch a courier to acquaint the duke of Orleans with my determination. He then requeſted permiſſion to make me a public viſit in the evening, which I granted.

At

At this viſit I clearly perceived that the court of France had a political reaſon, which ſhe wiſhed to conceal from other powers. After the uſual ceremonies, the ambaſſador, in the preſence of a circle of three or fourſcore people, expreſſed himſelf thus:—The king, my maſter, madam, having learnt that you had an intention of viſiting his dominions, has ordered me to acquaint you, that you will be received in them with all the honours due to your high birth, and that he is deſirous of procuring you every thing that can render your journey agreeable.—

I readily caught the hint, and anſwered, that I ſhould always receive, with acknowledgement, any marks of kindneſs from ſo great a monarch. He then aſked what time I had fixed for my departure, and what route I propoſed to take. I felt that the publicneſs of this

this queſtion, might make a poſitive anſwer ſomewhat dangerous. I evaded it, therefore, by ſaying, that I imagined it could not be in leſs than two months; but that, at all adventures, I ſhould take the rout of Mount Cenis. My eyes were fixed on the ambaſſador, and I ſaw that he readily ſeized the meaning of my anſwer.

The next day I wrote to my dear chevalier, and acquainted him with what had occurred. I was going to a court where I ſhould ſee his father. I felt a kind of pride in exhibiting myſelf to that nobleman with all my virtues, in loading him with my friendſhip, and thus avenging myſelf of that kind of ſlight which he had ſeemed to ſhow me; for, I repeat it, I had at that time the weakneſs to conſider his conduct as an inſult. I, however, wiſhed to know

how the chevalier would have me behave towards his father; and, concealing from him my ſentiments in this point, the only one in which he ſaw not the bottom of my ſoul, I acquainted him with the plan of conduct I had laid down for myſelf, without diſcloſing to him its object. He approved it altogether. He gave me the character of his father, ſuch as, indeed, he really was; ſuch as I found him to be, ſpite of the ſorrows he has occaſioned me; ſedate, generous, beneficent, a good father, and well deſerving all my eſteem, if an unhappy paſſion had not forced me to hate him.

Whilſt I remained at Rome, I frequently ſaw the French ambaſſador, who gave me all the information of which I ſtood in need, in a country where every thing I was about to ſee would

would be new to me. The day of my departure came. My ſeparation from the ambaſſador of Malta was painful. I had conceived for him the tendereſt reſpect. He was a worthy old man, who had arrived at the firſt dignities of his order, equally dear to his comrades, and eſteemed by ſtrangers. In him were diſplayed that loyalty and ſincere love for religion, which were poſſeſſed by thoſe ancient knights, who had ſo often contended with my anceſtors; and he was well formed to impreſs an high idea of that auguſt order, of which he was a member. He offered me, in the name of the grand-maſter, a ſuperb ſervice of ſilver gilt, as an acknowledgement for having preferred his miniſter, to take up my reſidence with. To this he added a valuable diamond, in his own name, to convince me how ſen-

ſible he was of the honour I had done him.

After many tears on both ſides, we parted, and I bad him a laſt adieu. Laſt, for death ſoon after put an end to his virtuous career, Two gentlemen of the French embaſſy accompanied me to Leghorn, by order of the ambaſſador. Two carriages, and three domeſtics on horſeback, were all my retinue. I uſually occupied one, with Madame Salmoni and her ſpouſe: Icoglan, and two women in my ſervice, were in the other: the two gentlemen were in a carriage of the ambaſſador's. On my arrival at Leghorn, I found a veſſel of fifty guns waiting for me. The gentlemen preſented to me the captain and officers; and having, in the name of their ſovereign, committed me to there care, they took leave of me, to return to Rome.

The

The next day I went on board. On my entering the veſſel I was ſaluted with one and twenty guns. In France the honours paid to women are not conſidered as of conſequence, and are always placed to the account of the gallantry of the nation. Nothing could exhibit a more beautiful ſight than this veſſel, which was ſuperbly decorated with rich waſte and quarter-cloths. The captain gave me a magnificent entertainment, to which he had invited all the perſons of diſtinction in Leghorn. Here I firſt knew thoſe delicate attentions, thoſe refined civilities, to our ſex, which the French diſplay in ſo high a degree. I then perceived, that a number of agreeable tints, which I had perceived in the character of the Chevalier de * * *, were owing to his nation: and it muſt be confeſſed, that, if we ſeek the French only for the pleaſure of their ſociety, we ſhall ſeldom

dom have reaſon to complain. The captain did the honours of his veſſel with all the gallantry imaginable. In the evening, the wind not being fair, I returned on ſhore.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.